

THE COMPLETE POETICAL WORKS

OF

LORD BYRON

VOL. II.

THE COMPLETE
POETICAL WORKS
OF
LORD BYRON

With an Introductory Memoir

BY
WILLIAM B. SCOTT

IN THREE VOLUMES
VOL. II.



LONDON
GEORGE ROUTLEDGE AND SONS, LTD.
NEW YORK : E. P. DUTTON AND CO.

Printed by the Motley Press, 18, Eldon Street, E.C.

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THE POETICAL WORKS
OF
LORD. BYRON.

Tales.

PARISINA.

TO

SCROPE BERDMORE DAVIES, Esq.

THE FOLLOWING POEM IS INSCRIBED,

BY ONE WHO HAS LONG ADMIRER HIS TALENTS, AND VALUED HIS FRIENDSHIP.

January 22, 1816.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following poem is grounded on a circumstance mentioned in Gibbon's "Antiquities of the House of Brunswick." I am aware, that in modern times the delicacy or fastidiousness of the reader may deem such subjects unfit for the purposes of poetry. The Greek dramatists, and some of the best of our old English writers, were of a different opinion: as Alfieri and Schiller have also been, more recently, upon the Continent. The following extract will explain the facts on which the story is founded. The name of *Azo* is substituted for Nicholas, as more metrical.

"Under the reign of Nicholas III. Ferrara was polluted with a domestic tragedy. By the testimony of an attendant, and his own observation, the Marquis of Este discovered the incestuous loves of his wife Parisina, and Hugo his bastard son, a beautiful and valiant youth. They were beheaded in the castle by the sentence of a father and husband, who published his shame, and survived their execution. He was unfortunate, if they were guilty : if they were innocent, he was still more unfortunate ; nor is there any possible situation in which I can sincerely approve the last act of the justice of a parent."—GIBBON'S *Miscellaneous Works*, vol. iii. p. 470.

I.

It is the hour when from the boughs
 The nightingale's high note is heard ;
 It is the hour when lovers' vows
 Seem sweet in every whisper'd word ;
 And gentle winds, and waters near,
 Make music to the lonely ear.
 Each flower the dews have lightly wet,
 And in the sky the stars are met,
 And on the wave is deeper blue,
 And on the leaf a browner hue,
 And in the heaven that clear obscure,
 So softly dark, and darkly pure,
 Which follows the decline of day,
 As twilight melts beneath the moon away.

II.

But it is not to list to the waterfall
 That Parisina leaves her hall,
 And it is not to gaze on the heavenly light
 That the lady walks in the shadow of night ;
 And if she sits in Este's bower,
 'Tis not for the sake of its full-blown flower ;
 She listens—but not for the nightingale—
 Though her ear expects as soft a tale.
 There glides a step through the foliage thick,
 And her cheek grows pale, and her heart beats quick.

There whispers a voice through the rustling leaves,
 And her blush returns, and her bosom heaves :
 A moment more and they shall meet—
 'T is past—her lover's at her feet.

III.

And what unto them is the world beside,
 With all its change of time and tide?
 Its living things, its earth and sky,
 Are nothing to their mind and eye.
 And heedless as the dead are they
 Of aught around, above, beneath ;
 As if all else had pass'd away,
 They only for each other breathe ;
 Their very sighs are full of joy
 So deep, that did it not decay,
 That happy madness would destroy
 The hearts which feel its fiery sway.
 Of guilt, of peril, do they deem
 In that tumultuous tender dream ?
 Who that have felt that passion's power,
 Or paused or fear'd in such an hour ?
 Or thought how brief such moments last ?
 But yet—they are already past !
 Alas ! we must awake before
 We know such vision comes no more.

IV.

With many a lingering look they leave
 The spot of guilty gladness past :
 And though they hope and vow, they grieve,
 As if that parting were the last.
 The frequent sigh—the long embrace—
 The lip that there would cling for ever,
 While gleams on Parisina's face
 The Heaven she fears will not forgive her,
 As if each calmly conscious star
 Beheld her frailty from afar—
 The frequent sigh, the long embrace,
 Yet binds them to their trysting place.

But it must come, and they must part
 In fearful heaviness of heart,
 With all the deep and shuddering chill
 Which follows fast the deeds of ill.

V.

And Hugo is gone to his lonely bed
 To covet there another's bride ;
 But she must lay her conscious head
 A husband's trusting heart beside.
 But fever'd in her sleep she seems,
 And red her cheek with troubled dreams,
 And mutters she in her unrest
 A name she dare not breathe by day,
 And clasps her lord unto the breast
 Which pants for one away :
 And he to that embrace awakes,
 And, happy in the thought, mistakes
 The dreaming sigh and warm caress,
 For such as he was wont to bless ;
 And could in very fondness weep
 O'er her who loves him even in sleep.

VI.

He clasp'd her sleeping to his heart,
 And listen'd to each broken word :
 He hears—Why doth Prince Azo start,
 As if the Archangel's voice he heard ?
 And well he may—a deeper doom
 Could scarcely thunder o'er his tomb,
 When he shall wake to sleep no more,
 And stand the eternal throne before.
 And well he may—his earthly peace
 Upon that sound is doom'd to cease.
 That sleeping whisper of a name
 Bespeaks her guilt and Azo's shame.
 And whose that name ? that o'er his pillow
 Sounds fearful as the breaking billow,
 Which rolls the plank upon the shore,
 And dashes on the pointed rock
 The wretch who sinks to rise no more,—
 So came upon his soul the shock.

And whose that name? 't is Hugo's,—his—
In sooth he had not deem'd of this!—
'T is Hugo's,—he, the child of one
He loved—his own all-evil son—
The offspring of his wayward youth,
When he betray'd Bianca's truth,
The maid whose folly could confide
In him who made her not his bride.

VII.

He pluck'd his poniard in its sheath,
But sheath'd it ere the point was bare—
Howe'er unworthy now to breathe,
He could not slay a thing so fair—
At least, not smiling—sleeping—there :
Nay more :— he did not wake her then,
But gazed upon her with a glance
Which, had she roused her from her trance,
Had frozen her sense to sleep again ;
And o'er his brow the burning lamp
Gleam'd on the dew-drops big and damp.
She spake no more—but still she slumber'd—
While, in his thought, her days are number'd.

VIII.

And with the morn he sought and found
In many a tale from those around,
The proof of all he fear'd to know,
Their present guilt, his future woe ;
The long-conniving damsels seek
To save themselves, and would transfer
The guilt—the shame—the doom—to her :
Concealment is no more—they speak
All circumstance which may compel
Full credence to the tale they tell :
And Azo's tortured heart and ear
Have nothing more to feel or hear.

IX.

He was not one who brook'd delay :
Within the chamber of his state,
The chief of Este's ancient sway
Upon his throne of judgment sate ;

His nobles and his guards are there,—
 Before him is the sinful pair ;
 Both young,—and *one* how passing fair !
 With swordless belt, and fetter'd hand,
 Oh, Christ ! that thus a son should stand
 Before a father's face !
 Yet thus must Hugo meet his sire,
 And hear the sentence of his ire,
 The tale of his disgrace !
 And yet he seems not overcome,
 Although, as yet, his voice be dumb.

x.

And still, and pale, and silently
 Did Parisina wait her doom ;
 How changed since last her speaking eye
 Glanced gladness round the glittering room,
 Where high-born men were proud to wait,
 Where Beauty watch'd to imitate
 Her gentle voice, her lovely mien,
 And gather from her air and gait
 The graces of its queen !
 Then,—had her eye in sorrow wept,
 A thousand warriors forth had leapt,
 A thousand swords had sheathless shone,
 And made her quarrel all their own.
 Now,—what is she ? and what are they ?
 Can she command, or these obey ?
 All silent and unheeding now,
 With downcast eyes and knitting brow,
 And folded arms, and freezing air,
 And lips that scarce their scorn forbear,
 Her knights and dames, her court—is there :
 And he, the chosen one, whose lance
 Had yet been couch'd before her glance,
 Who—were his arm a moment free—
 Had died or gain'd her liberty ;
 The minion of his father's bride,—
 He, too, is fetter'd by her side ;
 Nor sees her swoln and full eye swim
 Less for her own despair than him :
 Those lids—o'er which the violet vein
 Wandering, leaves a tender stain,

Shining through the smoothest white
 That e'er did softest kiss invite—
 Nor seem'd with hot and livid glow
 To press, not shade, the orbs below;
 Which glance so heavily and fill,
 As tear on tear grows gathering still.

XI.

And he for her had also wept,
 But for the eyes that on him gazed:
 His sorrow, if he felt it, slept;
 Stern and erect his brow was raised.
 Whate'er the grief his soul avow'd,
 He would not shrink before the crowd;
 But yet he dared not look on her;
 Remembrance of the hours that were—
 His guilt, his love, his present state—
 His father's wrath, all good men's hate—
 His earthly, his eternal fate—
 And hers,—oh, hers! he dared not throw
 One look upon that death-like brow!
 Else had his rising heart betray'd
 Remorse for all the wreck it made.

XII.

And Azo spake:—"But yesterday
 I gloried in a wife and son;
 That dream this morning pass'd away;
 Ere day declines, I shall have none.
 My life must linger on alone;
 Well,—let that pass,—there breathes not one
 Who would not do as I have done:
 Those ties are broken—not by me;
 Let that too pass; the doom's prepared!
 Hugo, the priest awaits on thee,
 And then thy crime's reward!
 Away! address thy prayers to Heaven,
 Before its evening stars are met—
 Learn if thou there canst be forgiven;
 Its mercy may absolve thee yet.
 But here upon the earth beneath,
 There is no spot where thou and I

Together for an hour could breathe :
 Farewell ! I will not see thee die—
 But thou, frail thing ! shalt wew his head—
 Away ! I cannot speak the rest :
 Go ! woman of the wanton breast ;
 Not I, but thou his blood dost shed :
 Go ! if that sight thou canst outlive,
 And joy thee in the life I give."

XIII.

And here stern Azo hid his face—
 For on his brow the swelling vein
 Throbb'd as if back upon his brain
 The hot blood ebb'd and flow'd again ;
 And therefore bow'd he for a space,
 And pass'd his shaking hand along
 His eye, to veil it from the throng :
 While Hugo raised his chained hands,
 And for a brief delay demands
 His father's ear : the silent sire
 Forbids not what his words require.

"It is not that I dread the death—
 For thou hast seen me by thy side
 All redly through the battle ride,
 And that—not once a useless brand—
 Thy slaves have wrested from my hand,
 Hath shed more blood in cause of thine,
 Than e'er can stain the axe of mine :
 Thou gav'st, and may'st resume my breath,
 A gift for which I thank thee not ;
 Nor are my mother's wrongs forgot,
 Her slighted love and ruin'd name,
 Her offspring's heritage of shame ;
 But she is in the grave, where he,
 Her son, thy rival, soon shall be.
 Her broken heart—my sever'd head—
 Shall witness for thee from the dead
 How trusty and how tender were
 Thy youthful love—paternal care.
 'Tis true that I have done thee wrong—
 But wrong for wrong :—this,—deem'd thy bride,
 The other victim of thy pride,—

Thou know'st for me was destined long ;
 Thou saw'st, and coveted'st her charms ;

And with thy very crime—my birth—

Thou taunted'st me, as little worth ;

A match ignoble for her arms,
 Because, forsooth, I could not claim
 The lawful heirship of thy name,
 Nor sit on Este's lineal throne ;

Yet, were a few short summers mine,

My name should more than Este's shine
 With honours all my own.

I had a sword—and have a breast
 That should have won as haught a crest
 As ever waved along the line

Of all these sovereign sires of thine.

Not always knightly spurs are worn

The brightest by the better born ;

And mine have lanced my courser's flank .

Before proud chiefs of princely rank,

When charging to the cheering cry

Of ' Este and of Victory ! '

I will not plead the cause of crime,

Nor sue thee to redeem from time

A few brief hours or days that must

At length roll o'er my reckless dust ;—

Such maddening moments as my past,

They could not, and they did not, last.

Albeit my birth and name be base,

And thy nobility of race

Disdain'd to deck a thing like me—

Yet in my lineaments they trace

Some features of my father's face,

And in my spirit—all of thee.

From thee this tamelessness of heart—

From thee—nay, wherefore dost thou start ?—

From thee in all their vigour came

My arm of strength, my soul of flame ;

Thou didst not give me life alone,

But all that made me more thine own.

See what thy guilty love hath done !

Repaid thee with too like a son !

I am no bastard in my soul, .

For that, like thine, abhor'd control ;

And for my breath, that hasty boon
 Thou gav'st and wilt resume so soon,
 I valued it no more than thou,
 When rose thy casque above thy brow,
 And we, all side by side, have striven,
 And o'er the dead our coursers driven:
 The past is nothing—and at last
 The future can but be the past;
 Yet would I that I then had died:

For though thou work'dst my mother's ill,
 And made thy own my destined bride,

I feel thou art my father still:
 And harsh as sounds thy hard decree,
 'Tis not unjust, although from thee.
 Begot in sin, to die in shame,
 My life begun and ends the same:
 As err'd the sire, so err'd the son,
 And thou must punish both in one.
 My crime seems worst to human view,
 But God must judge between us too!"

XIV.

He ceased—and stood with folded arms,
 On which the circling fetters sounded;
 And not an ear but felt as wounded,
 Of all the chiefs that there were rank'd,
 When those dull chains in meeting clank'd:
 Till Parisina's fatal charms
 Again attracted every eye—
 Would she thus hear him doom'd to die!
 She stood, I said, all pale and still,
 The living cause of Hugo's ill:
 Her eyes unmoved, but full and wide,
 Not once had turn'd to either side—
 Nor once did those sweet eyelids close,
 Or shade the glance o'er which they rose,
 But round their orbs of deepest blue
 The circling white dilated grew—
 And there with glassy gaze she stood
 As ice were in her curdled blood;
 But every now and then a tear
 So large and slowly gather'd slid
 From the long dark fringe of that fair lid,

It was a thing to see, not hear !
 And those who saw, it did surprise,
 Such drops could fall from human eyes.
 To speak she thought—the imperfect note
 Was choked within her swelling throat,
 Yet seem'd in that low hollow groan
 Her whole heart gushing in the tone.
 It ceased—again she thought to speak,
 Then burst her voice in one long shriek,
 And to the earth she fell like stone
 Or statue from its base o'erthrown,
 More like a thing that ne'er had life,—
 A monument of Azor's wife,—
 Than her, that living guilty thing,
 Whose every passion was a sting,
 Which urged to guilt, but could not bear
 That guilt's detection and despair.
 But yet she lived—and all too soon
 Recover'd from that death-like swoon—
 But scarce to reason—every sense
 Had been o'erstrung by pangs intense ;
 And each frail fibre of her brain
 (As bowstrings, when relax'd by rain,
 The erring arrow launch aside)
 Sent forth her thoughts all wild and wide—
 The past a blank, the future black,
 With glimpses of a dreary track,
 Like lightning on the desert path,
 When midnight storms are mustering wrath.
 She fear'd—she felt that something ill
 Lay on her soul so deep and chill ;
 That there was sin and shame she knew,
 That some one was to die—but who ?
 She had forgotten :—did she breathe ?
 Could this be still the earth beneath,
 The sky above, and men around ;
 Or were they fiends who now so frown'd
 On one, before whose eyes each eye
 Till then had smiled in sympathy ?
 All was confused and undefined
 To her all-jarr'd and wandering mind ;
 A chaos of wild hopes and fears :
 And now in laughter, now in tears,

But madly still in each extreme,
 She strove with that convulsive dream;
 For so it seem'd on her to break:
 Oh! vainly must she strive to wake!

xv.

The Convent bells are ringing,
 But mournfully and slow;
 In the grey square turret swinging,
 With a deep sound, to and fro.
 Heavily to the heart they go!
 Hark! the hymn is singing—
 The song for the dead below,
 Or the living who shortly shall be so!
 For a departing being's soul
 The death-hymn peals and the hollow bells knoll:
 He is near his mortal goal;
 Kneeling at the Friar's knee,
 Sad to hear and piteous to see—
 Kneeling on the bare cold ground,
 With the block before and the guards around—
 And the headsman with his bare arm ready,
 That the blow may be both swift and steady,
 Feels if the axe be sharp and true
 Since he set its edge anew:
 While the crowd in a speechless circle gather
 To see the Son fall by the doom of the Father!

xvi.

It is a lovely hour as yet
 Before the summer sun shall set,
 Which rose upon that heavy day,
 And mock'd it with his steadiest ray;
 And his evening beams are shed
 Full on Hugo's fated head,
 As his last confession pouring
 To the monk, his doom deploring
 In penitential holiness,
 He bends to hear his accents bless
 With absolution such as may
 Wipe our mortal stains away.
 That high sun on his head did glisten
 As he there did bow and listen,

And the rings of chestnut hair
 Curl'd half down, his neck so bare ;
 But brighter still the beam was thrown
 Upon the axe which near him shone
 With a clear and ghastly glitter——
 Oh ! that parting hour was bitter !
 Even the stern stood chill'd with awe ;
 Dark the crime, and just the law——
 Yet they shudder'd as they saw.

XVII.

The parting prayers are said and over
 Of that false son, and daring lover !
 His beads and sins are all recounted,
 His hours to their last minute mounted ;
 His mantling cloak before was stripp'd,
 His bright brown locks must now be clipp'd ;
 'T is done—all closely are they shorn ;
 The vest which till this moment worn——
 The scarf which Parisina gave
 Must not adorn him to the grave,
 Even that must now be thrown aside,
 And o'er his eyes the kerchief tied ;
 But no—that last indignity
 Shall ne'er approach his haughty eye.
 All feelings seemingly subdued,
 In deep disdain were half renew'd,
 When headsman's hands prepared to bind
 Those eyes which would not brook such blind,
 As if they dared not look on death.
 "No—yours my forfeit blood and breath ;
 These hands are chain'd, but let me die
 At least with an unshackled eye——
 Strike!"—and as the word he said,
 Upon the block he bow'd his head :
 These the last accents Hugo spoke :
 "Strike:"—and flashing fell the stroke——
 Roll'd the head—and, gushing, sunk
 Back the stain'd and heaving trunk,
 In the dust, which each deep vein
 Slaked with its ensanguined rain ;
 His eyes and lips a moment quiver,
 Convulsed and quick—then fix for ever.

He died, as erring man should die,
 Without display, without parade;
 Meekly had he bow'd and pray'd,
 As not disdaining priestly aid,
 Nor desperate of all hope on high.
 And while before the Prior kneeling,
 His heart was wean'd from earthly feeling;
 His wrathful sire, his paramour—
 What were they in such an hour?
 No more reproach, no more despair,
 No thought but heaven, no word but prayer—
 Save the few which from him broke,
 When, bared to meet the headsman's stroke,
 He claim'd to die with eyes unbound,
 His sole adieu to those around.

XVIII.

Still as the lips that closed in death,
 Each gazer's bosom held his breath:
 But yet, afar, from man to man,
 A cold electric shiver ran,
 As down the deadly blow descended
 On him whose life and love thus ended;
 And, with a hushing sound compress'd,
 A sigh shrunk back on every breast;
 But no more thrilling noise rose there,
 Beyond the blow that to the block
 Pierced through with forced and sullen shock,
 Save one:—what cleaves the silent air
 So madly shrill, so passing wild?
 That, as a mother's o'er her child,
 Done to death by sudden blow,
 To the sky these accents go,
 Like a soul's in endless woe,
 Through Azo's palace-lattice driven,
 That horrid voice ascends to heaven,
 And every eye is turn'd thereon:
 But sound and sight alike are gone!
 It was a woman's shriek—and ne'er
 In madlier accents rose despair;
 And those who heard it, as it pass'd,
 In mercy wish'd it were the last.

XIX.

Hugo is fallen ; and, from that hour,
No more in palace, hall, or bower,
Was Parisina heard or seen :
Her name—as if she ne'er had been—
Was banish'd from each lip and ear,
Like words of wantonness or fear ;
And from Prince Azo's voice, by none
Was mention heard of wife or son ;
No tomb, no memory had they ;
Theirs was unconsecrated clay—
At least the knight's who died that day.
But Parisina's fate lies hid
Like dust beneath the coffin lid :
Whether in convent she abode,
And won to heaven her dreary road
By blighted and remorseful years
Of scourge, and fast, and sleepless tears ;
Or if she fell by bowl or steel,
For that dark love she dared to feel ;
Or if, upon the moment smote,
She died by tortures less remote,
Like him she saw upon the block,
With heart that shared the headsman's shock,
In quicken'd brokenness that came,
In pity, o'er her shatter'd frame,
None knew—and none can ever know :
But whatsoe'er its end below,
Her life began and closed in woe !

XX.

And Azo found another bride,
And goodly sons grew by his side ;
But none so lovely and so brave
As him who wither'd in the grave ;
Or if they were—on his cold eye
Their growth but glanced unheeded by,
Or noticed with a smother'd sigh.
But never tear his cheek descended,
And never smile his brow unbended ;

And o'er that fair broad brow were wrought
 The intersected lines of thought ;
 Those furrows which the burning share
 Of Sorrow ploughs untimely there ;
 Scars of the lacerating mind
 Which the Soul's war doth leave behind,
 He was past all mirth or woe :
 Nothing more remain'd below
 But sleepless nights and heavy days,
 A mind all dead to scorn or praise,
 A heart which shunn'd itself—and yet
 That would not yield, nor could forget,
 Which, when it least appear'd to melt,
 Intently thought, intensely felt :
 The deepest ice which ever froze
 Can only o'er the surface close ;
 The living stream lies quick below,
 And flows, and cannot cease to flow.
 Still was his seal'd-up bosom haunted
 By thoughts which Nature hath implanted ;
 Too deeply rooted thence to vanish,
 Howe'er our stifled tears we banish ;
 When, struggling as they rise to start,
 We check those waters of the heart,
 They are not dried—those tears unshed
 But flow back to the fountain-head,
 And resting in their spring more pure,
 For ever in its depth endure,
 Unseen, unwept, but uncongeal'd,
 And cherish'd most where least reveal'd.
 With inward starts of feeling left,
 To throb o'er those of life bereft,
 Without the power to fill again
 The desert gap which made his pain ;
 Without the hope to meet them where
 United souls shall gladness share ;
 With all the consciousness that he
 Had only pass'd a just decree ;
 That they had wrought their doom of ill ;
 Yet Azo's age was wretched still.
 The tainted branches of the tree,
 If lopp'd with care, a strength may give,
 By which the rest shall bloom and live

All greenly fresh and wildly free :
 But if the lightning, in its wrath,
 The waving boughs with fury scathe
 The massy trunk the ruin feels,
 And never more a leaf reveals.

THE PRISONER OF CHILLON.

SONNET ON CHILLON.

ETERNAL Spirit of the chainless Mind !
 Brightest in dungeons, Liberty ! thou art,
 For there thy habitation is the heart—
 The heart which love of thee alone can bind ;
 And when thy sons to fetters are consign'd—
 To fetters, and the damp vault's dayless gloom,
 Their country conquers with their martyrdom,
 And Freedom's fame finds wings on every wind.
 Chillon ! thy prison is a holy place,
 And thy sad floor an altar—for 't was trod,
 Until his very steps have left a trace
 Worn, as if thy cold pavement were a sod,
 By Bonnivard ! May none those marks efface,
 For they appeal from tyranny to God.

ADVERTISEMENT.

WHEN this poem was composed, I was not sufficiently aware of the history of Bonnivard, or I should have endeavoured to dignify the subject by an attempt to celebrate his courage and his virtues. With some account of his life I have been furnished, by the kindness of a citizen of that republic, which is still proud of the memory of a man worthy of the best age of ancient freedom :—

“François de Bonnivard, fils de Louis de Bonnivard, originaire de Seyssel et Seigneur de Lunes, naquit en 1496. Il fit ses études à Turin : en 1510 Jean Amé de Bonnivard, son oncle, lui résigna le Prieuré de St. Victor, qui aboutissait aux murs de Genève, et qui formait un bénéfice considérable.

“Ce grand homme—(Bonnivard mérite ce titre par la force de son âme, la droiture de son cœur, la noblesse de ses intentions, la sagesse de ses conseils, le courage de ses démarches l'étendue de ses connaissances, et la vivacité de son esprit),—ce grand homme, qui excitera l'admiration de tous ceux qu'une vertu héroïque peut encore émouvoir, inspirera encore la plus vive reconnaissance dans les cœurs des Gênois qui aiment Genève. Bonnivard en fut toujours un des plus fermes appuis : pour assurer la liberté de notre République, il ne craignit pas de perdre souvent la sienne ; il oublia son repos ; il méprisa ses richesses ; il ne négligea rien pour affermir le bonheur d'une patrie qu'il honora de son choix : dès ce moment il la chérit comme le plus zélé de ses citoyens ; il la servit avec l'intrépidité d'un héros, et il écrivit son Histoire avec la naïveté d'un philosophe et la chaleur d'un patriote.

“Il dit dans le commencement de son Histoire de Genève, *que, dès qu'il eut commencé de lire l'histoire des nations, il se sentit entraîné par son goût pour les Républiques, dont il épousa toujours les intérêts : c'est ce goût pour la liberté qui lui fit sans doute adopter Genève pour sa patrie.*

“Bonnivard, encore jeune, s'annonça hautement comme le défenseur de Genève contre le Duc de Savoye et l'Evêque.

“En 1519, Bonnivard devient le martyr de sa patrie. Le Duc de Savoye étant entré dans Genève avec cinq cent hommes, Bonnivard craint le ressentiment du Duc ; il voulut se retirer à Fribourg pour en éviter les suites ; mais il fut trahi par deux hommes qui l'accompagnaient, et conduit par ordre du Prince à Grolée, où il resta prisonnier pendant deux ans. Bonnivard était malheureux dans ses voyages : comme ses malheurs n'avaient point ralenti son zèle pour Genève, il était toujours un ennemi redoutable pour ceux qui la menaçaient, et par conséquent il devait être exposé à leurs coups. Il fut rencontré en 1530 sur le Jura par des voleurs, qui le dépouillèrent et qui le mirent encore entre les mains du Duc de Savoye : ce Prince le fit enfermer dans le Château de Chillon, où il resta sans être interrogé jusques en 1536 ; il fut alors délivré par les Bernois, qui s'emparèrent du Pays de Vaud.

“Bonnivard, en sortant de sa captivité, eut le plaisir de

trouver Genève libre et réformée : la République s'empessa de lui témoigner sa reconnaissance, et de le dédommager des maux qu'il avoit soufferts ; elle le reçut Bourgeois de la ville au mois de Juin, 1536 ; elle lui donna la maison habitée autrefois par le Vicaire-Général, et elle lui assigna une pension de deux cent écus d'or tant qu'il séjournerait à Genève. Il fut admis dans le Conseil de Deux-Cent en 1537.

“Bonnivard n'a pas fini d'être utile : après avoir travaillé à rendre Genève libre, il réussit à la rendre tolérante. Bonnivard engagea le Conseil à accorder aux ecclésiastiques et aux paysans un tems suffisant pour examiner les propositions qu'on leur faisait ; il réussit par sa douceur à on prêche toujours le Christianisme avec succès quand on le prêche avec charité.

“Bonnivard fut savant : ses manuscrits, qui sont dans la bibliothèque publique, prouvent qu'il avoit bien lu les auteurs classiques Latins, et qu'il avoit approfondi la théologie et l'histoire. Ce grand homme aimait les sciences, et il croyait qu'elles pouvaient faire la gloire de Genève ; aussi il ne négligea rien pour les fixer dans cette ville naissante, en 1551 il donna sa bibliothèque au public ; elle fut le commencement de notre bibliothèque publique ; et ces livres sont en partie les rares et belles éditions du quinzième siècle qu'on voit dans notre collection. Enfin, pendant la même année, ce bon patriote institua la République son héritière, à condition qu'elle emploierait ses biens à entretenir le collège dont on projetait la fondation.

“Il paraît que Bonnivard mourut en 1570 ; mais on ne peut l'assurer, parcequ'il y a une lacune dans le Nécrologe depuis le mois de Juillet, 1570, jusqu'en 1571.”

I.

My hair is grey, but not with years,
 Nor grew it white
 In a single night,
 As men's have grown from sudden fears:
 My limbs are bow'd, though not with toil,
 But rusted with a vile repose,
 For they have been a dungeon's spoil,
 And mine has been the fate of those
 To whom the goodly earth and air
 Are bann'd, and barr'd—forbidden fare ;

But this was for my father's faith
 I suffer'd chains and courted death;
 That father perish'd at the stake
 For tenets he would not forsake;
 And for the same his lineal race
 In darkness found a dwelling-place;
 We were seven—who now are one,
 Six in youth, and one in age,
 Finish'd as they had begun,
 Proud of Persecution's rage;
 One in fire, and two in field,
 Their belief with blood have seal'd,
 Dying as their father died,
 For the God their foes denied;
 Three were in a dungeon cast,
 Of whom this wreck is left the last.

II.

There are seven pillars of Gothic mould,
 In Chillon's dungeons deep and old,
 There are seven columns, massy and grey,
 Dim with a dull imprison'd ray,
 A sunbeam which hath lost its way,
 And through the crevice and the cleft
 Of the thick wall is fallen and left;
 Creeping o'er the floor so damp,
 Like a marsh's meteor lamp:
 And in each pillar there is a ring,
 And in each ring there is a chain;
 That iron is a cankering thing,
 For in these limbs its teeth remain,
 With marks that will not wear away,
 Till I have done with this new day,
 Which now is painful to these eyes,
 Which have not seen the sun so rise
 For years—I cannot count them o'er,
 I lost their long and heavy score,
 When my last brother droop'd and died,
 And I lay living by his side.

III.

They chain'd us each to a column stone,
 And we were three—yet, each alone;

We could not move a single pace,
 We could not see each other's face,
 But with that pale and livid light
 That made us strangers in our sight :
 And thus together—yet apart,
 Fetter'd in hand, but join'd in heart,
 'T was still some solace, in the dearth
 Of the pure elements of earth,
 To hearken to each other's speech,
 And each turn comforter to each
 With some new hope, or legend old,
 Or song heroically bold ;
 But even these at length grew cold.
 Our voices took a dreary tone,
 An echo of the dungeon stone,
 A grating sound, not full and free,
 As they of yore were wont to be :
 It might be fancy, but to me
 They never sounded like our own.

IV.

I was the eldest of the three,
 And to uphold and cheer the rest
 I ought to do—and did my best—
 And each did well in his degree.*
 The youngest, whom my father loved,
 Because our mother's brow was given
 To him, with eyes as blue as heaven—
 For him my soul was sorely moved ;
 And truly might it be distress'd
 To see such bird in such a nest ;
 For he was beautiful as day—
 (When day was beautiful to me
 As to young eagles, being free)—
 A polar day, which will not see
 A sunset till its summer's gone,
 Its sleepless summer of long light,
 The snow-clad offspring of the sun :
 And thus he was as pure and bright,
 And in his natural spirit gay,
 With tears for nought but others' ills,
 And then they flow'd like mountain rills,

Unless he could assuage the woe
Which he abhorr'd to view below.

V.

The other was as pure of mind,
But form'd to combat with his kind;
Strong in his frame, and of a mood
Which 'gainst the world in war had stood,
And perish'd in the foremost rank
With joy:—but not in chains to pine:
His spirit wither'd with their clank,
I saw it silently decline—
And so perchance in sooth did mine:
But yet I forced it on to cheer
Those relics of a home so dear.
He was a hunter of the hills,
Had follow'd there the deer and wolf;
To him his dungeon was a gulf,
And fetter'd feet the worst of ills.

VI.

Lake Leman lies by Chillon's walls:
A thousand feet in depth below
Its massy waters meet and flow;
Thus much the fathom-line was sent
From Chillon's snow-white battlement,
Which round about the wave inthrals:
A double dungeon wall and wave
Have made—and like a living grave
Below the surface of the lake
The dark vault lies wherein we lay,
We heard it ripple night and day;
Sounding o'er our heads it knock'd;
And I have felt the winter's spray
Wash through the bars when winds were high
And wanton in the happy sky;
And then the very rock hath rock'd,
And I have felt it shake, unshock'd,
Because I could have smiled to see
The death that would have set me free.

VII.

I said my neaver brother pined,
 I said his mighty heart declined,
 He loathed and put away his food ;
 It was not that 't was coarse and rude,
 For we were used to hunter's fare,
 And for the like had little care :
 The milk drawn from the mountain goat
 Was changed for water from the moat,
 Our bread was such as captives' tears
 Have moisten'd many a thousand years,
 Since man first pent his fellow men
 Like brutes within an iron den ;
 But what were these to us or him ?
 These wasted not his heart or limb ;
 My brother's soul was of that mould
 Which in a palace had grown cold,
 Had his free breathing been denied
 The range of the steep mountain's side ;
 But why delay the truth ?—he died.
 I saw, and could not hold his head,
 Nor reach his dying hand—nor dead,—
 Though hard I strove, but strove in vain
 To rend and gnash my bonds in twain.
 He died, and they unlock'd his chain,
 And scoop'd for him a shallow grave
 Even from the cold earth of our cave.
 I begg'd them as a boon to lay
 His corse in dust whereon the day
 Might shine—it was a foolish thought,
 But then within my brain it wrought,
 That even in death his freeborn breast
 In such a dungeon could not rest.
 I might have spared my idle prayer—
 They coldly laugh'd, and laid him there :
 The flat and turfless earth above
 The being we so much did love ;
 His empty chain above it leant,
 Such murder's fitting monument I

VIII.

But he, the favourite and the flower,
 Most cherish'd since his natal hour,

His mother's image in fair face,
The infant love of all his race;
His martyr'd father's dearest thought,
My latest care, for whom I sought
To hoard my life, that his might be
Less wretched now, and one day free;
He, too, who yet had held untired
A spirit natural or inspired—
He, too, was struck, and day by day
Was wither'd on the stalk away.
Oh, God ! it is a fearful thing
To see the human soul take wing
In any shape, in any mood :
I've seen it rushing forth in blood,
I've seen it on the breaking ocean
Strive with a swoln convulsive motion,
I've seen the sick and ghastly bed
Of sin delirious with its dread ;
But these were horrors—this was woe
Unmix'd with such—but sure and slow:
He faded, and so calm and meek,
So softly worn, so sweetly weak,
So tearless, yet so tender, kind,
And grieved for those he left behind ;
With all the while a cheek whose bloom
Was as a mockery of the tomb,
Whose tints as gently sunk away
As a departing rainbow's ray ;
An eye of most transparent light,
That almost made the dungeon bright,
And not a word of murmur, not
A groan o'er his untimely lot,—
A little talk of better days,
A little hope, my own to raise,
For I was sunk in silence—lost
In this last loss, of all the most ;
And then the sighs he would suppress
Of fainting nature's feebleness,
More slowly drawn, grew less and less :
I listen'd, but I could not hear ;
I call'd, for I was wild with fear ;
I knew 't was hopeless, but my dread
Would not be thus admonished ;

I call'd, and thought I heard a sound—
 I burst my chain with one strong bound,
 And rush'd to him:—I found him not,
 I only stirr'd in this black spot,
 I only lived, I only drew
 The accursed breath of dungeon-dew;
 The last, the sole, the dearest link
 Between me and the eternal brink,
 Which bound me to my failing race,
 Was broken in this fatal place.
 One on the earth, and one beneath—
 My brothers—both had ceased to breathe:
 I took that hand which lay so still,
 Alas; my own was full as chill;
 I had not strength to stir, or strive,
 But felt that I was still alive—
 A frantic feeling, when we know
 That what we love shall ne'er be so.
 I know not why
 I could not die,
 I had no earthly hope but faith,
 And that forbade a selfish death.

IX.

What next befell me then and there—
 I know not well—I never knew—
 First came the loss of light, and air,
 And then of darkness too:
 I had no thought, no feeling—none—
 Among the stones I stood a stone,
 And was, scarce conscious what I wist,
 As shrubless crags within the mist;
 For all was blank, and bleak, and grey;
 It was not night, it was not day;
 It was not even the dungeon-light,
 So hateful to my heavy sight,
 But vacancy absorbing space,
 And fixedness without a place;
 There were no stars, no earth, no time,
 No check, no change, no good, no crime,
 But silence, and a stirless breath
 Which neither was of life nor death;

A sea of stagnant idleness,
Blind, boundless, mute, and motionless !

X.

A light broke in upon my brain,—
It was the carol of a bird ;
It ceased, and then it came again,
The sweetest song ear ever heard,
And mine was thankful, till my eyes
Ran over with the glad surprise,
And they that moment could not see
I was the mate of misery ;
But then by dull degrees came back
My senses to their wonted track ;
I saw the dungeon walls and floor
Close slowly round me as before,
I saw the glimmer of the sun
Creeping as it before had done,
But through the crevice where it came
That bird was perch'd, as fond and tame
And tamer than upon the tree ;
A lovely bird, with azure wings,
And song that said a thousand things,
And seem'd to say them all for me !
I never saw its like before,
I ne'er shall see its likeness more :
It seem'd like me to want a mate,
But was not half so desolate,
And it was come to love me when
None lived to love me so again,
And cheering from my dungeon's brink,
Had brought me back to feel and think.
I know not if it late were free,
Or broke its cage to perch on mine,
But knowing well captivity,
Sweet bird ! I could not wish for thine !
Or if it were, in winged guise,
A visitant from Paradise ;
For—Heaven forgive that thought ! the while
Which made me both to weep and smile—
I sometimes deem'd that it might be
My brother's soul come down to me ;

But then at last away it flew,
And then 't was mortal well I knew,
For he would never thus have flown,
And left me twice so doubly lone,
Lone as the corse within its shroud,
Lone as a solitary cloud,—

A single cloud on a sunny day,
While all the rest of heaven is clear,
A frown upon the atmosphere,
That hath no business to appear
When skies are blue, and earth is gay.

XI.

A kind of change came in my fate,
My keepers grew compassionate ;
I know not what had made them so,
They were inured to sights of woe,
But so it was :—my broken chain
With links unfasten'd did remain,
And it was liberty to stride
Along my cell from side to side,
And up and down, and then athwart,
And tread it over every part ;
And round the pillars one by one,
Returning where my walk begun,
Avoiding only, as I trod,
My brothers' graves without a sod ;
For if I thought with heedless tread
My step profaned their lowly bed,
My breath came gaspingly and thick,
And my crush'd heart fell blind and sick.

XII.

I made a footing in the wall,
It was not therefrom to escape,
For I had buried one and all
Who loved me in a human shape ;
And the whole earth would hencetorth be
A wider prison unto me :
No child, no sire, no kin had I,
No partner in my misery ;

I thought of this, and I was glad,
 For thought of them had made me mad;
 But I was curious to ascend
 To my barr'd windows, and to bend
 Once more, upon the mountains high,
 The quiet of a loving eye.

XIII.

I saw them, and they were the same,
 They were not changed like me in frame;
 I saw their thousand years of snow
 On high—their wide long lake below,
 And the blue Rhone in fullest flow;
 I heard the torrents leap and gush
 O'er channell'd rock and broken bush:
 I saw the white-wall'd distant town,
 And whiter sails go skimming down;
 And then there was a little isle,
 Which in my very face did smile,
 The only one in view;
 A small green isle, it seem'd no more,
 Scarce broader than my dungeon floor,
 But in it there were three tall trees,
 And o'er it blew the mountain breeze,
 And by it there were waters flowing,
 And on it there were young flowers growing,
 Of gentle breath and hue.
 The fish swam by the castle wall,
 And they seem'd joyous, each and all;
 The eagle rode the rising blast,
 Methought he never flew so fast
 As then to me he seem'd to fly;
 And then new tears came in my eye,
 And I felt troubled—and would fain
 I had not left my recent chain;
 And when I did descend again,
 The darkness of my dim abode
 Fell on me as a heavy load;
 It was as is a new-dug grave,
 Closing o'er one we sought to save,—
 And yet my glance, too much oppress
 Had almost need of such a rest.

XIV.

It might be months, or years, or days,
I kept no count, I took no note,
I had no hope my eyes to raise,
And clear them of their dreary mote ;
At last men came to set me free ;
I ask'd not why, and reck'd not where ;
It was at length the same to me,
Fetter'd or fetterless to be,
I learn'd to love despair.
And thus when they appear'd at last,
And all my bonds aside were cast,
These heavy walls to me had grown
A hermitage—and all my own !
And half I felt as they were come
To tear me from a second home :
With spiders I had friendship made,
And watch'd them in their sullen trade,
Had seen the mice by moonlight play,
And why should I feel less than they ?
We were all inmates of one place,
And I, the monarch of each race,
Had power to kill—yet, strange to tell !
In quiet we had learn'd to dwell ;
My very chains and I grew friends,
So much a long communion tends
To make us what we are :—even I
Regain'd my freedom with a sigh.

MAZEPPA.

ADVERTISEMENT.

“CELUI qui remplissait alors cette place était un gentilhomme Polonais, nommé Mazeppa, né dans le palatinat de Podolie : il avait été élevé page de Jean Casimir, et avait pris à sa cour quelque teinture des belles-lettres. Une intrigue qu'il eut dans sa jeunesse avec la femme d'un gentilhomme Polonais ayant été découverte, le mari le fit lier tout nu sur un cheval farouche et le laissa aller en cet état. Le cheval, qui était du pays de l'Ukraine, y retourna, et y porta Mazeppa, demi-mort de fatigue et de faim. Quelques paysans le secoururent : il resta longtems parmi eux, et se signala dans plusieurs courses contre les Tartares. La supériorité de ses lumières lui donna une grande considération parmi les Cosaques : sa réputation s'augmentant de jour en jour obligea le Czar à le faire Prince de l'Ukraine.” —VOLTAIRE, *Hist. de Charles XII.* p. 196.

“Le roi fuyant, et poursuivi, eut son cheval tué sous lui ; le Colonel Gieta, blessé, et perdant tout son sang, lui donna le sien. Ainsi on remit deux fois à cheval, dans sa fuite, ce conquérant qui n'avait pu y monter pendant la bataille.” —P. 216.

“Le roi alla par un autre chemin avec quelques cavaliers. Le carrosse, où il était, rompit dans la marche ; on le remit à cheval. Pour comble de disgrâce, il s'égara pendant la nuit dans un bois ; là, son courage ne pouvant plus suppléer à ses forces épuisées, les douleurs de sa blessure devenues plus insupportables par la fatigue, son cheval étant tombé de lassitude, il se coucha quelques heures au pied d'un arbre, en danger d'être surpris à tout moment par les vainqueurs, qui le cherchaient de tous côtés.” —P. 218.

I.

'T WAS after dread Pul̄towa's day,
 When fortune left the royal Swede,
 Around a slaughter'd army lay,
 No more to combat and to bleed.
 The power and glory of the war,
 Faithless as their vain votaries, men,
 Had pass'd to the triumphant Czar,
 And Moscow's walls were safe again,
 Until a day more dark and drear,
 And a more memorable year,
 Should give to slaughter and to shame
 A mightier host and haughtier name ;
 A greater wreck, a deeper fall,
 A shock to one—a thunderbolt to all.

II.

Such was the hazard of the die ;
 The wounded Charles was taught to fly
 By day and night through field and flood,
 Stain'd with his own and subjects' blood ;
 For thousands fell that flight to aid :
 And not a voice was heard t' upbraid
 Ambition in his humbled hour,
 When truth had nought to dread from power.
 His horse was slain, and Gæta gave
 His own—and died the Russians' slave.
 This too sinks after many a league
 Of well sustain'd but vain fatigue ;
 And in the depth of forests, darkling
 The watch-fires in the distance sparkling—
 The beacons of surrounding foes—
 A king must lay his limbs at length.
 Are these the laurels and repose
 For which the nations strain their strength ?
 They laid him by a savage tree,
 In outworn nature's agony ;
 His wounds were stiff, his limbs were stark ;
 The heavy hour was chill and dark ;
 The fever in his blood forbade
 A transient slumber's fitful aid :

And thus it was ; but yet through all,
 Kinglike the monarch bore his fall,
 And made, in this extreme of ill,
 His pangs the vassals of his will :
 All silent and subdued were they,
 As once the nations round him lay.

III.

A band of chiefs !—alas ! how few,
 Since but the fleeting of a day
 Had thinn'd it ; but this wreck was true
 And chivalrous : upon the clay
 Each sate him down, all sad and mute,
 Beside his monarch and his steed ;
 For danger levels man and brute,
 And all are fellows in their need.
 Among the rest, Mazeppa made
 His pillow in an old oak's shade—
 Himself as rough, and scarce less old,
 The Ukraine's Hetman, calm and bold ;
 But first, outspent with this long course,
 The Cossack prince rubb'd down his horse,
 And made for him a leafy bed,
 And smoooth'd his fetlocks and his mane,
 And slack'd his girth, and stripp'd his rein,
 And joy'd to see how well he fed :
 For until now he had the dread
 His wearied courser might refuse
 To browse beneath the midnight dew :
 But he was hardy as his lord,
 And little cared for bed and board ;
 But spirited and docile too,
 Whate'er was to be done, would do.
 Shaggy and swift, and strong of limb,
 All Tartar-like he carried him ;
 Obey'd his voice, and came to call,
 And knew him in the midst of all :
 Though thousands were around,—and Night,
 Without a star, pursued her flight,—
 That steed from sunset until dawn
 His chief would follow like a fawn.

IV.

This done, Mazeppa spread his cloak,
 And laid his lance beneath his oak,
 Felt if his arms in order good
 The long day's march had well withstood—
 If still the powder fill'd the pan,

And flints unloosen'd kept their lock—
 His sabre's hilt and scabbard felt,
 And whether they had chafed his belt ;
 And next the venerable man,
 From out his havresack and can,

Prepared and spread his slender stock ;
 And to the monarch and his men
 The whole or portion offer'd then
 With far less of inquietude

Than courtiers at a banquet would.
 And Charles of this his slender share
 With smiles partook a moment there,
 To force of cheer a greater show,
 And seem above both wounds and woe ;
 And then he said—" Of all our band,
 Though firm of heart and strong of hand,
 In skirmish, march, or forage, none
 Can less have said or more have done
 Than thee, Mazeppa ! on the earth
 So fit a pair had never birth,

Since Alexander's days till now,
 As thy Bucephalus and thou ;
 All Scythia's fame to thine should yield
 For pricking on o'er flood and field."

Mazeppa answer'd—" Ill betide
 The school wherein I learn'd to ride !"

Quoth Charles—" Old Hetman, wherefore so,
 Since thou hast learn'd the art so well ?"

Mazeppa said—" 'T were long to tell ;
 And we have many a league to go,
 With every now and then a blow,
 And ten to one at least the foe,
 Before our steeds may graze at ease
 Beyond the swift Borysthenes :

And, Sire, your limbs have need of rest,
 And I will be the sentinel
 Of this your troop."—"But I request,"
 Said Sweden's monarch, "thou wilt tell
 This tale of thine, and I may reap,
 Perchance, from this the boon of sleep;
 For at this moment from my eyes,
 The hope of present slumber flies."
 "Well, Sire, with such a hope, I'll track
 My seventy years of memory back:
 I think 't was in my twentieth spring,—
 Ay, 't was,—when Casimir was king—
 John Casimir,—I was his page
 Six summers, in my earlier age:
 A learned monarch, faith! was he,
 And most unlike your Majesty;
 He made no wars, and did not gain
 New realms to lose them back again;
 And (save debates in Warsaw's diet)
 He reign'd in most unseemly quiet;
 Not that he had no cares to vex;
 He loved the muses and the sex;
 And sometimes these so froward are,
 They made him wish himself at war;
 But soon his wrath being o'er, he took
 Another mistress, or new book;
 And then he gave prodigious fêtes—
 All Warsaw gather'd round his gates
 To gaze upon his splendid court,
 And dames, and chiefs, of princely port.
 He was the Polish Solomon,
 So sung his poets, all but one,
 Who being unpension'd, made a satire,
 And boasted that he could not flatter.
 It was a court of jousts and mimes,
 Where every courtier tried at rhymes;
 Even I for once produced some verses,
 And sign'd my odes 'Despairing Thyrsis.'
 There was a certain Palatine,
 A count of far and high descent,
 Rich as a salt, or silver mine;
 And he was proud, ye may divine,
 As if from heaven he had been sent:

He had such wealth in blood and ore
 As few could match beneath the throne ;
 And he would gaze upon his store,
 And o'er his pedigree would pore,
 Until by some confusion led,
 Which almost look'd like want of head,
 He thought their merits were his own.
 His wife was not of his opinion ;
 His junior she by thirty years,
 Grew daily tired of his dominion ;
 And, after wishes, hopes, and fears,
 To virtue a few farewell tears,
 A restless dream or two, some glances
 At War-aw's youth, some songs and dances,
 Awaited but the usual chances,
 Those happy accidents which render
 The coldest dames so very tender,
 To deck her Count with titles given,
 'T is said, as passports into heaven ;
 But, strange to say, they rarely boast
 Of these, who have deserved them most.

v.

" I was a goodly stripling then ;
 At seventy years I so may say,
 That there were few, or boys or men,
 Who, in my dawning time of day,
 Of vassal or of knight's degree,
 Could vie in vanities with me ;
 For I had strength, youth, gaiety,
 A port, not like to this ye see,
 But smooth, as all is rugged now ;
 For time, and care, and war, have plough'd
 My very soul from out my brow ;
 And thus I should be disavow'd
 By all my kind and kin, could they
 Compare my day and yesterday ;
 This change was wrought, too, long ere age
 Had ta'en my features for his page ;
 With years, ye know, have not declined
 My strength, my courage, or my mind,
 Or at this hour I should not be
 Telling old tales beneath a tree,

With starless skies my canopy
 But let me on : Theresa's form—
 Methinks it glides before me now,
 Between me and yon chestnut's bough,
 The memory is so quick and warm ;
 And yet I find no words to tell
 The shape of her I loved so well :
 She had the Asiatic eye,
 Such as our Turkish neighbourhood
 Hath mingled with our Polish blood,
 Dark as above us is the sky ;
 But through it stole a tender light,
 Like the first moonrise of midnight ;
 Large, dark, and swimming in the stream,
 Which seem'd to melt to its own beam ;
 All love, half languor, and half fire,
 Like saints that at the stake expire,
 And lift their raptured looks on high,
 As though it were a joy to die.
 A brow like a midsummer lake,
 Transparent with the sun therein,
 When waves no murmur dare to make,
 And heaven beholds her face within.
 A cheek and lip—but why proceed ?
 I loved her then, I love her still ;
 And such as I am, love indeed
 In fierce extremes—in good and ill.
 But still we love even in our rage,
 And haunted to our very age
 With the vain shadow of the past,
 As is Mazeppa to the last.

VI.

“We met—we gazed—I saw, and sigh'd,
 She did not speak, and yet replied ;
 There are ten thousand tones and signs
 We hear and see, but none defines—
 Involuntary sparks of thought,
 Which strike from out the heart o'erwrought,
 And form a strange intelligence,
 Alike mysterious and intense,

Which link the burning chain that binds,
 Without their will, young hearts and minds :
 Conveying, as the electric wire,
 You know not how, the absorbing fire.
 I saw, and sigh'd—in silence wept,
 And still reluctant distance kept,
 Until I was made known to her,
 And we might then and there confer
 Without suspicion—then, even then,
 I long'd, and was resolved to speak ;
 But on my lips they died again,
 The accents tremulous and weak,
 Until one hour.—There is a game,
 A frivolous and foolish play,
 Wherewith we while away the day ;
 It is—I have forgot the name—
 And we to this, it seems, were set,
 By some strange chance, which I forget :
 I reck'd not if I won or lost,
 It was enough for me to be
 So near to hear, and oh ! to see
 The being whom I loved the most.
 I watch'd her as a sentinel,
 (May ours this dark night watch as well !)
 Until I saw, and thus it was,
 That she was pensive, nor perceiv'd
 Her occupation, nor was grieved
 Nor glad to lose or gain ; but still
 Play'd on for hours, as if her will
 Yet bound her to the place, though not
 That hers might be the winning lot.
 Then through my brain the thought did pass
 Even as a flash of lightning there,
 That there was something in her air
 Which would not doom me to despair ;
 And on the thought my words broke forth,
 All incoherent as they were ;
 Their eloquence was little worth,
 But yet she listen'd---'t is enough—
 Who listens once will listen twice ;
 Her heart, be sure, is not of ice,
 And one refusal no rebuff.

VII.

"I loved, and was beloved again—
 They tell me, Sire, you never knew
 Those gentle frailties ; if 't is true,
 I shorten all my joy or pain ;
 To you 't would seem absurd as vain ;
 But all men are not born to reign,
 Or o'er their passions, or as you
 Thus o'er themselves and nations too.
 I am—or rather *was*—a prince,
 A chief of thousands, and could lead
 Them on where each would foremost bleed ;
 But could not o'er myself evince
 The like control—But to resume ;
 I loved, and was beloved again ;
 In sooth, it is a happy doom,
 But yet where happiest ends in pain.
 We met in secret, and the hour
 Which led me to that lady's bower
 Was fiery Expectation's dower.
 My days and nights were nothing—all
 Except that hour, which doth recall,
 In the long lapse from youth to age,
 No other like itself : I'd give
 The Ukraine back again to live
 It o'er once more, and be a page,
 The happy page, who was the lord
 Of one soft heart, and his own sword,
 And had no other gem nor wealth
 Save nature's gift of youth and health.
 We met in secret—doubly sweet,
 Some say, they find it so to meet ;
 I know not that—I would have given
 My life but to have call'd her mine
 In the full view of earth and heaven ;
 For I did oft and long repine
 That we could only meet by stealth.

VIII.

" For lovers there are many eyes,
 And such there were on us ; the devil
 On such occasions should be civil—

The devil !—I'm loth to do him wrong,
 It might be some untoward saint,
 Who would not be at rest too long,
 But to his pious bile gave vent—
 But one fair night, some lurking spies
 Surprised and seized us both.
 The Count was something more than wroth—
 I was unarm'd ; but if in steel,
 All cap-à-pie from head to heel,
 What 'gainst their numbers could I do ?
 'T was near his castle, far away
 From city or from succour near,
 And almost on the break of day ;
 I did not think to see another,
 My moments seem'd reduced to few ;
 And with one prayer to Mary Mother,
 And, it may be, a saint or two,
 As I resign'd me to my fate,
 They led me to the castle gate :
 Theresa's doom I never knew
 Our lot was henceforth separate.
 An angry man, ye may opine,
 Was he, the proud Count Palatine ;
 And he had reason good to be,
 But he was most enraged lest such
 An accident should chance to touch
 Upon his future pedigree ;
 Nor less amazed, that such a blot
 His noble 'scutcheon should have got,
 While he was highest of his line ;
 Because unto himself he seem'd
 The first of men, nor less he deem'd
 In others' eyes, and most in mine.
 'Sdeath ! with a *page*--perchance a king
 Had reconciled him to the thing ;
 But with a stripling of a page—
 I felt, but cannot paint his rage.

• IX.

" 'Bring forth the horse !'—the horse was brought ;
 In truth, he was a noble steed,
 A Tartar of the Ukraine breed,
 Who look'd as though the speed of thought

Were in his limbs ; but he was wild,
 Wild as the wild deer, and untaught,
 With spur and bridle undefiled—
 'T was but a day he had been caught ;
 And snorting, with erected mane,
 And struggling fiercely, but in vain,
 In the full foam of wrath and dread
 To me the desert-born was led :
 They bound me on, that menial throng ;
 Upon his back with many a thong ;
 Then loosed him with a sudden lash—
 Away !—away !—and on we dash !
 Torrents less rapid and less rash.

X.

“ Away !—away !—My breath was gone,
 I saw not where he hurried on :
 'T was scarcely yet the break of day,
 And on he foam'd—away !—away !
 The last of human sounds which rose,
 As I was darted from my foes,
 Was the wild shout of savage laughter,
 Which on the wind came roaring after
 A moment from that rabble rout :
 With sudden wrath I wrench'd my head,
 And snapp'd the cord, which to the mane
 Had bound my neck in lieu of rein,
 And, writhing half my form about,
 Howl'd back my curse ; but, 'midst the tread,
 The thunder of my courser's speed,
 Perchance they did not hear nor heed :
 It vexes me—for I would fain
 Have paid their insult back again.
 I paid it well in after days :
 There is not of that castle gate,
 Its drawbridge and portcullis' weight,
 Stone, bar, moat, bridge, or barrier left ;
 Nor of its fields a blade of grass,
 Save what grows on a ridge of wall,
 Where stood the hearth-stone of the hall ;
 And many a time ye there might pass,
 Nor dream that e'er that fortress was.

I saw its turrets in a blaze,
 Their crackling battlements all cleft,
 And the hot lead pour down like rain
 From off the scorch'd and blackening roof,
 Whose thickness was not vengeance-proof.
 They little thought that day of pain,
 When launch'd, as on the lightning's flash,
 They bade me to destruction dash,
 That one day I should come again,
 With twice five thousand horse, to thank
 The Count for his uncourteous ride.
 They play'd me then a bitter prank,
 When, with the wild horse for my guide,
 They bound me to his foaming flank :
 At length I play'd them one as frank—
 For time at last sets all things even—
 And if we do but watch the hour,
 There never yet was human power
 Which could evade, if unforgiven,
 The patient search and vigil long
 Of him who treasures up a wrong.

XI.

"Away, away, my steed and I,
 Upon the pinions of the wind,
 All human dwellings left behind ;
 We sped like meteors through the sky,
 When with its crackling sound the night
 Is chequer'd with the northern light :
 Town—village—none were on our track,
 But a wild plain of far extent,
 And bounded by a forest black ;
 And, save the scarce seen battlement
 On distant heights of some strong hold,
 Against the Tartars built of old,
 No trace of man. The year before
 A Turkish army had march'd o'er ;
 And where the Spahi's hoof hath trod,
 The verdure flies the bloody sod :
 The sky was dull, and dim, and gray,
 And a low breeze crept moaning by—
 I could have answer'd with a sigh—
 But fast we fled, away, away,

And I could neither sigh nor pray ;
 And my cold sweat-drops fell like rain
 Upon the courser's bristling mane ;
 But, snorting still with rage and fear,
 He flew upon his far career :
 At times, I almost thought, indeed,
 He must have slacken'd in his speed ,
 But no—my bound and slender frame
 Was nothing to his angry might,
 And merely like a spur became :
 Each motion which I made to free
 My swoln limbs from their agony
 Increased his fury and affright :
 I tried my voice,—'t was faint and low,
 But yet he swerved as from a blow ;
 And, starting to each accent, sprang
 As from a sudden trumpet's clang :
 Meantime my cords were wet with gore,
 Which, oozing through my limbs, ran o'er ;
 And in my tongue the thirst became
 A something fierier far than flame.

XII.

"We near'd the wild wood—'t was so wide,
 I saw no bounds on either side ;
 'T was studded with old sturdy trees,
 That bent not to the roughest breeze
 Which howls down from Siberia's waste,
 And strips the forest in its haste,—
 But these were few and far between,
 Set thick with shrubs more young and green,
 Luxuriant with their annual leaves,
 Ere strown by those autumnal eves
 That nip the forest's foliage dead,
 Discolour'd with a lifeless red,
 Which stands thereon like stiffen'd gore
 Upon the slain when battle's o'er,
 And some long winter's night hath shed
 Its frost o'er every tombless head,
 So cold and stark the raven's beak
 May peck unpierced each frozen cheek ;
 'T was a wild waste of underwood,
 And here and there a chestnut stood,

The strong oak, and the hardy pine ;
 But far apart—and well it were,
 Or else a different lot were mine—
 The boughs gave way; and did not tear
 My limbs ; and I found strength to bear
 My wounds, already scarr'd with cold ;
 My bonds forbade to loose my hold.
 We rustled through the leaves like wind,
 Left shrubs, and trees, and wolves behind ;
 By night I heard them on the track,
 Their troop came hard upon our back,
 With their long gallop, which can tire
 The hound's deep hate, and hunter's fire :
 Where'er we flew they follow'd on,
 Nor left us with the morning sun ;
 Behind I saw them, scarce a rood,
 At day-break winding through the wood,
 And through the night had heard their feet .
 Their stealing, rustling step repeat.
 Oh ! how I wish'd for spear or sword,
 At least to die amidst the horde,
 And perish —if it must be so—
 At bay, destroying many a foe !
 When first my courser's race begun,
 I wish'd the goal already won ;
 But now I doubted strength and speed.
 Vain doubt ! his swift and savage breed
 Had nerve'd him like the mountain-roe ;
 Nor faster falls the blinding snow
 Which whelms the peasant near the door
 Whose threshold he shall cross no more,
 Bewilder'd with the dazzling blast,
 Than through the forest-paths he pass'd—
 Untired, untamed, and worse than wild ;
 All furious as a favour'd child
 Balk'd of its wish ; or fiercer still—
 A woman piqued—who has her will.

XIII.

"The wood was past ; 't was more than noon,
 But chill the air, although in June ;
 Or it might be my veins ran cold—
 Prolong'd endurance tames the bold ;

And I was then not what I seem,
 But headlong as a wintry stream,
 And wore my feelings out before
 I well could count their causes o'er :
 And what with fury, fear, and wrath,
 The tortures which beset my path,
 Cold, hunger, sorrow, shame, distress,
 Thus bound in nature's nakedness ;
 Sprung from a race whose rising blood,
 When stirr'd beyond its calmer mood,
 And trodden hard upon, is like
 The rattle-snake's, in act to strike,
 What marvel if this worn-out trunk
 Beneath its woes a moment sunk ?
 The earth gave way, the skies roll'd round
 I seem'd to sink upon the ground ;
 But err'd, for I was fastly bound.
 My heart turn'd sick, my brain grew sore,
 And throbb'd awhile, then beat no more :
 The skies spun like a mighty wheel ;
 I saw the trees like drunkards reel,
 And a slight flash sprang o'er my eyes,
 Which saw no farther ; he who dies
 Can die no more than then I died.
 O'ertortured by that ghastly ride,
 I felt the blackness come and go,
 And strove to wake ;
 But could not make
 My senses climb up from below :
 I felt as on a plank at sea.
 When all the waves that dash o'er thee,
 At the same time upheave and whelm,
 And hurl thee towards a desert realm.
 My undulating life was as
 The fancied lights that flitting pass •
 Our shut eyes in deep midnight, when
 Fever begins upon the brain ;
 But soon it pass'd, with little pain,
 But a confusion worse than such :
 I own that I should deem it much,
 Dying, to feel the same again ;
 And yet I do suppose we must
 Feel far more ere we turn to dust :

No matter ; I have bared my brow
Full in Death's face --before—and now.

XIV.

"My thoughts came back ; where was I? Cold,
And numb, and giddy : pulse by pulse
Life reassumed its lingering hold,
And throb by throb,—till grown a pang
Which for a moment would convulse,
My blood reflow'd, though thick and chill ;
My ear with uncouth noises rang,
My heart began once more to thrill ;
My sight return'd, though dim ; alas !
And thicken'd, as it were, with glass.
Methought the dash of waves was nigh ;
There was a gleam too of the sky,
Studded with stars ;—it is no dream ;
The wild horse swims the wilder stream !
The bright broad river's gushing tide
Sweeps, winding onward, far and wide,
And we are half-way, struggling o'er
To yon unknown and silent shore.
The waters broke my hollow trance,
And with a temporary strength
My stiffen'd limbs were rebaptized,
My courser's broad breast proudly braves,
And dashes off the ascending waves,
And onward we advance !
We reach the slippery shore at length,
A haven I but little prized,
For all behind was dark and drear,
And all before was night and fear.
How many hours of night or day
In those suspended pangs I lay,
I could not tell ; I scarcely knew
If this were human breath I drew.

XV.

"With glossy skin, and dripping mane,
And reeling limbs, and reeking flank,
The wild steed's sinewy nerves still strain
Up the repelling bank.
We gain the top : a boundless plain

Spreads through the shadow of the night,
 And onward, onward, onward, seems,
 Like precipices in our dreams,
 To stretch beyond the sight ;
 And here and there a speck of white,
 Or scatter'd spot of dusky green,
 In masses broke into the light,
 As rose the moon upon my right ;
 But nought distinctly seen
 In the dim waste would indicate
 The omen of a cottage gate ;
 No twinkling taper from afar
 Stood like a hospitable star ;
 Not even an ignis-fatuus rose
 To make him merry with my woes :
 That very cheat had cheer'd me then !
 Although detected, welcome still,
 Reminding me, through every ill,
 Of the abodes of men.

XVI.

" Onward we went—but slack and slow ;
 His savage force at length o'erspent,
 The drooping courser, faint and low,
 A feeble foaming went.
 A sickly infant had had power
 To guide him forward in that hour ;
 But useless all to me :
 His new-born tameness nought avail'd—
 My limbs were bound ; my force had fail'd,
 Perchance, had they been free.
 With feeble effort still I tried
 To rend the bonds so starkly tied,
 But still it was in vain ;
 My limbs were only wrung the more,
 And soon the idle strife gave o'er,
 Which but prolong'd their pain :
 The dizzy race seem'd almost done,
 Although no goal was nearly won :
 Some streaks announced the coming sun—
 How slow, alas ! he came !
 Methought that mist of dawning gray
 Would never dapple into day ;

How heavily it roll'd away—
 Before the eastern flame
 Rose crimson, and deposed the stars,
 And call'd the radiance from their cars,
 And fill'd the earth, from his deep throne,
 With lonely lustre, all his own.

XVII.

“Up rose the sun ; the mists were curl'd
 Back from the solitary world
 Which lay around, behind, before.
 What boot'd it to traverse o'er
 Plain, forest, river ? Man nor brute,
 Nor dint of hoof, nor print of foot,
 Lay in the wild luxuriant soil ;
 No sign of travel, none of toil ;
 The very air was mute ;
 And not an insect's shrill small horn,
 Nor matin bird's new voice was borne
 From herb nor thicket. Many a worst,
 Panting as if his heart would burst,
 The weary brute still stagger'd on ;
 And still we were—or seem'd—alone.
 At length, while reeling on our way,
 Methought I heard a courser neigh,
 From out yon tuft of blackening firs.
 Is it the wind those branches stirs ?
 No, no ! from out the forest prance

A trampling troop ; I see them come !
 In one vast squadron they advance !

I strove to cry—my lips were dumb.
 The steeds rush on in plunging pride ;
 But where are they the reins to guide ?
 A thousand horse, and none to ride !
 With flowing tail, and flying mane,
 Wide nostrils never stretch'd by pain,
 Mouths bloodless to the bit or rein,
 And feet that iron never shod,
 And flanks unscar'd by spur or rod,
 A thousand horse, the wild, the free,
 Like waves that follow o'er the sea,

Came thickly thundering on,
 As if our faint approach to meet ;

The sight re-nerved my courser's feet,
 A moment staggering, feebly fleet,
 A moment, with a faint low neigh,
 He answer'd, and then fell ;
 With gasps and glazing eyes he lay,
 And reeking limbs immoveable,
 His first and last career is done !
 On came the troop—they saw him stoop,
 They saw me strangely bound along
 His back with many a bloody thong :
 They stop, they start, they snuff the air,
 Gallop a moment here and there,
 Approach, retire, wheel round and round,
 Then plunging back with sudden bound,
 Headed by one black mighty steed,
 Who seem'd the patriarch of his breed,
 Without a single speck or hair
 Of white upon his hairy hide ;
 They snort, they foam, neigh, swerve aside,
 And backward to the forest fly,
 By instinct, from a human eye.
 They left me there to my despair,
 Link'd to the dead and stiffening wretch,
 Whose lifeless limbs beneath me stretch,
 Oppressed from that unwonted weight,
 From whence I could not extricate
 Nor him nor me—and there we lay,
 The dying on the dead !
 I little deem'd another day
 Would see my houseless, helpless head.

“ And there from morn to twilight bound,
 I felt the heavy hours toil round,
 With just enough of life to see
 My last of suns go down on me,
 In hopeless certainty of mind,
 That makes us feel at length resign'd
 To that which our foreboding years
 Present the worst and last of fears :
 Inevitable—even a boon,
 Nor more unkind for coming soon,
 Yet shunn'd and dreaded with such care,
 As if it only were a snare

That prudence might escape :
 At times both wished for and implored,
 At times sought with self-pointed sword,
 Yet still a dark and hideous close
 To even intolerable woes,
 And welcome in no shape.
 And, strange to say, the sons of pleasure
 They who have revell'd beyond measure
 In beauty, wassail, wine, and treasure,
 Die calm, or calmer, oft than he
 Whose heritage was misery :
 For he who hath in turn run through
 All that was beautiful and new,
 Hath nought to hope, and nought to leave ;
 And, save the future, (which is view'd
 Not quite as men are base or good,
 But as their nerves may be endured,)
 With nought perhaps to grieve :
 The wretch still hopes his woes must end,
 And Death, whom he should deem his friend,
 Appears, to his distemper'd eyes,
 Arrived to rob him of his prize,
 The tree of his new Paradise.
 To-morrow would have given him all,
 Repaid his pangs, repair'd his fall ;
 To-morrow would have been the first
 Of days no more deplored or curst,
 But bright, and long, and beckoning years,
 Seen dazzling through the mist of tears,
 Guerdon of many a painful hour ;
 To-morrow would have given him power
 To rule, to shine, to smite, to save—
 And must it dawn upon his grave ?

XVIII.

“ The sun was sinking—still I lay
 Chan'd to the still and stiffening steed
 I thought to mingle there our clay,
 And my dim eyes of death had need ;
 No hope arose of being freed :
 I cast my last looks up the sky,
 And there between me and the sun
 I saw the expecting raven fly,

Who scarce would wait till both should die,
 Ere his repast begun ;
 He flew, and perch'd, then flew once more,
 And each time nearer than before ;
 I saw his wing through twilight flit,
 And once so near me he alit
 I could have smote, but lack'd the strength ;
 But the slight motion of my hand,
 And feeble scratching of the sand,
 The exerted throat's faint struggling noise,
 Which scarcely could be call'd a voice,
 Together scared him off at length.
 I know no more—my latest dream
 Is something of a lovely star .
 Which fix'd my dull eyes from afar,
 And went and came with wandering beam,
 And of the cold, dull, swimming, dense
 Sensation of recurring sense,
 And then subsiding back to death,
 And then again a little breath,
 A little thrill, a short suspense,
 An icy sickness curdling o'er
 My heart, and sparks that cross'd my brain—
 A gasp, a throb, a start of pain,
 A sigh, and nothing more.

XIX.

“ I woke—where was I?—Do I see
 A human face look down on me?
 And doth a roof above me close?
 Do these limbs on a couch repose?
 Is this a chamber where I lie?
 And is it mortal yon bright eye,
 That watches me with gentle glance?
 I closed my own again once more,
 As doubtful that my former trance
 Could not as yet be o'er.
 A slender girl, long hair'd, and tall,
 Sate watching by the cottage wall ;
 The sparkle of her eye I caught,
 Even with my first return of thought ;
 For ever and anon she threw

A prying, pitying glance on me
 With her black eyes so wild and free :
 I gazed, and gazed, until I knew
 No vision it could be,—
 But that I lived, and was released
 From adding to the vulture's feast :
 And when the Cossack maid beheld
 My heavy eyes at length unseal'd,
 She smiled—and I essay'd to speak,
 But fail'd—and she approach'd, and made
 With lip and finger signs that said,
 I must not strive as yet to break
 The silence, till my strength should be
 Enough to leave my accents free ;
 And then her hand on mine she laid,
 And smooth'd the pillow for my head,
 And stole along on tiptoe tread,
 And gently oped the door, and spake
 In whispers—ne'er was voice so sweet I
 Even music follow'd her light feet :
 But those she call'd were not awake,
 And she went forth ; but, ere she pass'd,
 Another look on me she cast,
 Another sign she made, to say,
 That I had nought to fear, that all
 Were near, at my command or call,
 And she would not delay
 Her due return :—while she was gone,
 Methought I felt too much alone.

XX.

"She came with mother and with sire—
 What need of more ? --I will not tire
 With long recital of the rest,
 Since I became the Cossack's guest.
 They found me senseless on the plain,
 They bore me to the nearest hut,
 They brought me into life again—
 Me—one day o'er their realm to reign !
 Thus the vain fool who strove to glut
 His rage, refining on my pain,
 Sent me forth to the wilderness,

Bound, naked, bleeding, and alone,
 To pass the desert to a throne,—
 What mortal his own doom may guess?
 Let none despond, let none despair!
 To-morrow the Borysthenes
 May see our coursers graze at ease
 Upon his Turkish bank, and never
 Had I such welcome for a river
 As I shall yield when safely there.
 Comrades, good night!"—The Herman threw
 His length beneath the oak tree shade,
 With leafy couch already made,
 A bed nor comfortless nor new
 To him, who took his rest whene'er
 The hour arrived, no matter where:
 His eyes the hastening slumbers steep.
 And if ye marvel Charles forgot
 To thank his tale, *he* wonder'd not,—
 The king had been an hour asleep.

THE ISLAND;

OR,

CHRISTIAN AND HIS COMRADES.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE foundation of the following story will be found partly in Lieutenant Bligh's "Narrative of the Mutiny and Seizure of the *Bounty*, in the South Sea, in 1789;"* and partly in "Mariner's Account of the Tonga Islands."

Glasgow, 1823.

CANTO THE FIRST.

I.

THE morning watch was come; the vessel lay
 Her course, and gently made her liquid way;

The cloven billow flash'd from off her prow
In furrows form'd by that majestic plough ;
The waters with their world were all before ;
Behind, the South Sea's many an islet shore.
The quiet night, now dappling, 'gan to wane,
Dividing darkness from the dawning main ;
The dolphins, not unconscious of the day,
Swam high, as eager of the coming ray ;
The stars from broader beams began to creep,
And lift their shining eyelids from the deep ;
The sail resumed its lately shadow'd white,
And the wind flutter'd with a freshening flight ;
The purpling ocean owns the coming sun,
But ere he break—a deed is to be done.

II.

The gallant chief within his cabin slept,
Secure in those by whom the watch was kept :
His dreams were of Old England's welcome shore,
(Of toils rewarded, and of dangers o'er ;
His name was added to the glorious roll
Of those who search the storm-surrounded Pole.
The worst was over, and the rest seem'd sure,
And why should not his slumber be secure ?
Alas ! his deck was trod by unwilling feet,
And wilder hands would hold the vessel's sheet ;
Young hearts which languish'd for some sunny isle,
Where summer years and summer women smile ;
Men without country, who, too long estranged,
Had found no native home, or found it changed,
And, half uncivilised, pref'r'd the cave
Of some soft savage to the uncertain wave—
The gushing fruits that nature gave untill'd ;
The wood without a path but where they will'd ;
The field o'er which promiscuous Plenty pour'd
Her horn ; the equal land without a lord ;
The wish—which ages have not yet subdued
In man—to have no master save his mood :
The earth, whose mine was on its face, unsold,
The glowing sun and produce all its gold ;
The freedom which can call each grot a home ;
The general garden, where all steps may roam,

Where Nature owns a nation as her child,
 Exulting in the enjoyment of the wild ;
 Their shells, their fruits, the only wealth they know,
 Their unexploring navy, the canoe ;
 Their sport, the dashing breakers and the chase ;
 Their strangest sight, an European face :—
 Such was the country which these strangers yearn'd
 To see again ; a sight they dearly earn'd.

III.

Awake, bold Bligh ! the foe is at the gate !
 Awake ! awake !—Alas ! it is too late !
 Fiercely beside thy cot the mutineer
 Stands, and proclaims the reign of rage and fear.
 Thy limbs are bound, the bayonet at thy breast ;
 The hands, which trembled at thy voice, arrest ;
 Dragg'd o'er the deck, no more at thy command
 The obedient helm shall veer, the sail expand ;
 That savage spirit, which would lull by wrath
 Its desperate escape from duty's path,
 Glares round thee, in the scarce believing eyes
 Of those who fear the chief thy sacrifice :
 For ne'er can man his conscience all assuage,
 Unless he drain the wine of passion—rage.

IV.

In vain, not silenced by the eye of death,
 Thou call'st the loyal with thy menaced breath :—
 They come not ; they are few, and, overawed,
 Must acquiesce, while sterner hearts applaud.
 In vain thou dost demand the cause : a curse
 Is all the answer, with the threat of worse.
 Full in thine eyes is waved the glittering blade,
 Close to thy throat the pointed bayonet laid.
 The levell'd muskets circle round thy breast
 In hands as steel'd to do the deadly rest.
 Thou dar'st them to their worst, exclaiming—" Fire !"
 But they who pitied not could yet admire ;
 Some lurking remnant of their former awe
 Restrain'd them longer than their broken law ;
 They would not dip their souls at once in blood,
 But left thee to the mercies of the flood.

V.

"Hoist out the boat!" was now the leader's cry;
 And who dare answer "No!" to Mutiny,
 In the first dawning of the drunken hour,
 The Saturnalia of unhoped-for power?
 The boat is lower'd with all the haste of hate,
 With its slight plank between thee and thy fate;
 Her only cargo such a scant supply
 As promises the death their hands deny;
 And just enough of water and of bread
 To keep, some days, the dying from the dead:
 Some cordage, canvas, sails, and lines, and twine,
 But treasures all to hermits of the brine,
 Were added after, to the earnest prayer
 Of those who saw no hope, save sea and air;
 And last, that trembling vassal of the Pole—
 The feeling compass—Navigation's soul.

VI.

And now the self-elected chief finds time
 To stun the first sensation of his crime,
 And raise it in his followers—"Ho! the bowl!"
 Lest passion should return to reason's shoal,
 "Brandy for heroes!" Burke could once exclaim—
 No doubt a liquid path to epic fame;
 And such the new-born heroes found it here,
 And drain'd the draught with an applauding cheer.
 "Huzza! for Otaheite!" was the cry.
 How strange such shouts from sons of Mutiny!
 The gentle island, and the genial soil,
 The friendly hearts, the feasts without a toil,
 The courteous manners but from nature caught,
 The wealth unhoarded, and the love unbought;
 Could these have charms for rudest sea-boys, driven
 Before the mast by every wind of heaven?
 And now, even now prepared with others' woes
 To earn mild Virtue's vain desire, repose?
 Alas! such is our nature! all but aim
 At the same end by pathways not the same;
 Our means, our birth, our nation, and our name,
 Our fortune, temper, even our outward frame,

Are far more potent o'er our yielding clay
Than aught we know beyond our little day.
Yet still there whispers the small voice within,
Heard through Gain's silence, and o'er Glory's din :
Whatever creed be taught, or land be trod,
Man's conscience is the oracle of God.

VII.

The launch is crowded with the faithful few
Who wait their chief, a melancholy crew :
But some remain'd reluctant on the deck—
Of that proud vessel—now a moral wreck—
And view'd their captain's fate with piteous eyes :
While others scoff'd his augur'd miseries,
Sneer'd at the prospect of his pigmy sail,
And the slight bark so laden and so frail.
The tender nautilus, who steers his prow,
The sea-born sailor of his shell canoe,
The ocean Mab, the fairy of the sea,
Seems far less fragile, and, alas ! more free.
He, when the lightning-wing'd tornados sweep
The surge, is safe—his port is in the deep—
And triumphs o'er the armadas of mankind,
Which shake the world, yet crumble in the wind.

VIII.

When all was now prepared, the vessel clear
Which hail'd her master in the mutineer,
A seaman, less obdurate than his mates,
Show'd the vain pity which but irritates ;
Watch'd his late chieftain with exploring eye,
And told, in signs, repentant sympathy ;
Held the moist shaddock to his parched mouth,
Which felt exhaustion's deep and bitter drouth.
But soon observed, this guardian was withdrawn,
Nor further mercy clouds rebellion's dawn.
Then forward stepp'd the bold and froward boy
His chief had cherish'd only to destroy,
And, pointing to the helpless prow beneath,
Exclaim'd, " Depart at once ! delay is death !"
Yet then, even then, his feelings ceased not all :
In that last moment could a word recall

Remorse for the black deed as yet half done,
 And what he hid from many show'd to one :
 When Bligh in stern reproach d manded where
 Was now his grateful sense of former care ?
 Where all his hopes to see his name aspire,
 And blazon Britain's thousand glories higher ?
 His feverish lips thus broke their gloomy spell,
 "'T is that ! 't is that ! I am in hell ! in hell !"
 No more he said : but urging to the bark
 His chief, commits him to his fragile ark ;
 These the sole accents from his tongue that fell,
 But volumes lurk'd below his fierce farewell.

IX.

The arctic sun rose broad above the wave ;
 The breeze now sank, now whisper'd from his cave ;
 As on the Æolian harp, his fitful wings
 Now swell'd, now flutter'd o'er his ocean strings.
 With slow, despairing oar, the abandon'd skiff
 Ploughs its drear progress to the scarce seen cliff,
 Which lifts its peak a cloud above the main :
That boat and ship shall never meet again !

But 't is not mine to tell their tale of grief,
 Their constant peril, and their scant relief ;
 Their days of danger, and their nights of pain ;
 Their manly courage even when deem'd in vain ;
 The sapping famine, rendering scarce a son
 Known to his mother in the skeleton ;
 The ills that lessen'd still their little store,
 And starved even Hunger till he wrung no more ;
 The varying frowns and favours of the deep,
 That now almost ingulfs, then leaves to creep
 With crazy oar and shatter'd strength along
 The tide that yields reluctant to the strong ;
 The incessant fever of that arid thirst
 Which welcomes, as a well, the clouds that burst
 Above their naked bones, and feels delight
 In the cold drenching of the stormy night,
 And from the outspread canvas gladly wrings
 A drop to moisten life's all-gasping springs ;
 The savage foe escaped, to seek again
 More hospitable shelter from the main ;

The ghastly spectres which were doom'd at last
 To tell as true a tale of dangers past,
 As ever the dark annals of the deep
 Disclosed for man to dread or woman weep.

X.

We leave them to their fate, but not unknown
 Nor unredress'd. Revenge may have her own :
 Roused discipline aloud proclaims their cause,
 And injured navies urge their broken laws.
 Pursue we on his track the mutineer,
 Whom distant vengeance had not taught to fear.
 Wide o'er the wave—away ! away ! away !
 Once more his eyes shall hail the welcome bay ;
 Once more the happy shores without a law
 Receive the outlaws whom they lately saw ;
 Nature, and Nature's goddess—woman—woos
 To lands where, save their conscience, none accuse ;
 Where all partake the earth without dispute,
 And bread itself is gather'd as a fruit ;
 Where none contest the fields, the woods, the streams :—
 The goldless age, where gold disturbs no dreams,
 Inhabits or inhabited the shore,
 Till Europe taught them better than before :
~~Reform'd~~ her customs, and amended theirs,
 But left her vices also to their heirs,
 Away with this ! behold them as they were,
 Do good with Nature, or with Nature err.
 "Huzza ! for Otaheite !" was the cry,
 As stately swept the gallant vessel by.
 The breeze springs up ; the lately flapping sail
 Extends its arch before the growing gale ;
 In swifter ripples stream aside the seas,
 Which her bold bow flings off with dashing ease.
 Thus Argo plough'd the Euxine's virgin foam,
 But those she wafted still look'd back to home :
 These spurn their country with their rebel bark,
 And fly her as the raven fled the ark ;
 And yet they seek to nestle with the dove,
 And tame their fiery spirits down to love.

CANTO THE SECOND.

I.

How pleasant were the songs of Toobonai,
When summer's sun went down the coral bay !
Come, let us to the islet's softest shade,
And hear the warbling birds ! the damsel said :
The wood-dove from the forest-depth shall coo,
Like voices of the gods from Bolotoo ;
We'll cull the flowers that grow above the dead,
For these most bloom where rests the warrior's head ;
And we will sit in twilight's face, and see
The sweet moon glancing through the tooa tree,
The lofty accents of whose sighing bough
Shall sadly please us as we lean below ;
Or climb the steep, and view the surf in vain
Wrestle with rocky giants o'er the main,
Which spurn in columns back the baffled spray.
How beautiful are these ! how happy they,
Who, from the toil and tumult of their lives,
Steal to look down where nought but ocean strives !
Even he too loves at times the blue lagoon,
And smooths his ruffled mane beneath the moon.

II.

Yes—from the sepulchre we'll gather flowers,
Then feast like spirits in their promised bowers,
Then plunge and revel in the rolling surf,
Then lay our limbs along the tender turf,
And, wet and shining from the sportive toil,
Anoint our bodies with the fragrant oil,
And plait our garlands gather'd from the grave,
And wear the wreaths that sprung from out the brave.
But lo ! night comes, the Moa woos us back,
The sound of mats are heard along our track ;
Anon the torchlight dance shall fling its sheen
In flashing mazes o'er the Marly's green ;
And we too will be there ; we too recall
The memory bright with many a festival,
Ere Fiji blew the shell of war, when foes
For the first time were wafted in canoes.
Alas ! for them the flower of mankind bleeds :
Alas ! for them our fields are rank with weeds :

Forgotten is the rapture, or unknown,
 Of wandering with the moon and love alone.
 But be it so :—*they* taught us how to wield
 The club, and rain our arrows o'er the field :
 Now let them reap the harvest of their art !
 But feast to-night ! to-morrow we depart.
 Strike up the dance ! the cava bowl fill high !
 Drain every drop !—to-morrow we may die.
 In summer garments be our limbs array'd ;
 Around our waists the tappa's white display'd ;
 Thick wreaths shall form our coronal, like spring's,
 And round our neck shall glance the hooni strings ;
 So shall their brighter hues contrast the glow
 Of the dusk bosoms that beat high below.

III.

But now the dance is o'er—yet stay awhile ;
 Ah, pause ! nor yet put out the social smile.
 To-morrow for the Mooa we depart,
 But not to-night—to-night is for the heart.
 Again bestow the wreaths we gently woo,
 Ye young enchantress, s of gay Licoo !
 How lovely are your forms ! how every sense
~~Revs~~ Revs to your beauties, soften'd, but intense,
 Like to the flowers on Mataloco's steep,
 Which fling their fragrance far athwart the deep !—
 We too will see Lico ; but—oh ! my heart !—
 What do I say ?—to-morrow we depart !

IV.

Thus rose a song—the harmony of times
 Before the winds blew Europe o'er these climes.
 True, they had vices—such are Nature's growth—
 But only the barbarian's— we have both ;
 The sordor of civilisation, mix'd
 With all the savage which man's fall hath fix'd.
 Who hath not seen Dissimulation's reign,
 The prayers of Abel link'd to deeds of Cain ?
 Who such would see may from his lattice view
 The Old World more degraded than the New,—
 Now *new* no more, save where Columbia rears
 Twin giants, born by Freedom to her spheres,

Where Chimborazo, over air, earth, wave,
Glares with his Titan eye, and sees no slave.

V.

Such was this ditty of Tradition's days,
Which to the dead a lingering fame conveys
In song, where fame as yet hath left no sign
Beyond the sound whose charm is half divine ;
Which leaves no record to the sceptic eye,
But yields young history all to harmony ;
A boy Achilles, with the centaur's lyre
In hand, to teach him to surpass his sire.
For one long-cherish'd ballad's simple stave,
Rung from the rock, or mingled with the wave,
Or from the bub'ling streamlet's grassy side,
Or gathering mountain echoes as they glide,
Hath greater power o'er each true heart and ear,
Than all the columns Conquest's minions rear ;
Invites, when hieroglyphics are a theme
For sages' labours, or the student's dream ;
Attracts, when History's volumes are a toil,—
The first, the freshest bud of Feeling's soil.
Such was this rude rhyme—rhyme is of the rude—
But such inspired the Norseman's solitude,
Who came and conquer'd : such, wherever rise
Lands which no foe destroy or civilise,
Exist : and what can our accomplish'd art
Of verse do more than reach the awaken'd heart ?

VI.

And sweetly now those untaught melodies
Broke the luxurious silence of the skies,
The sweet siesta of a summer day,
The tropic afternoon of Toobonai,
When every flower was bloom, and air was balm,
And the first breath began to stir the palm,
The first yet voiceless wind to urge the wave
All gently to refresh the thirsty cave,
Where sat the songstress with the stranger boy,
Who taught her passion's desolating joy,
Too powerful over every heart, but most
O'er those who know not how it may be lost ;

O'er those who, burning in the new-born fire,
 Like martyrs revel in their funeral pyre,
 With such devotion to their ecstasy,
 That life knows no such rapture as to die :
 And die they do ; for earthly life has nought
 Match'd with that burst of nature, even in thought ;
 And all our dreams of better life above
 But close in one eternal gush of love.

VII.

There sat the gentle savage of the wild,
 In growth a woman, though in years a child,
 As childhood dates within our colder clime,
 Where nought is ripen'd rapidly save crime ;
 The infant of an infant world, as pure
 From nature—lovely, warm, and premature ;
 Dusky like night, but night with all her stars,
 Or cavern sparkling with its native spars ;
 With eyes that were a language and a spell,
 A form like Aphrodite's in her shell,
 With all her loves around her on the deep,
 Voluptuous as the first approach of sleep,
 Yet full of life—for through her tropic cheek
~~The blush~~ would make its way, and all but speak :
 The sun-born blood suffused her neck, and threw
 O'er her clear nut-brown skin a lucid hue,
 Like coral reddening through the darken'd wave,
 Which draws the diver to the crimson cave.
 Such was this daughter of the southern seas,
 Herself a billow in her energies,
 To bear the bark of others' happiness,
 Nor feel a sorrow till their joy grew less :
 Her wild and warm yet faithful bosom knew
 No joy like what it gave ; her hopes ne'er drew
 Aught from experience, that chill touchstone whose
 Sad proof reduces all things from their hues :
 She fear'd no ill, because she knew it not,
 Or what she knew was soon—too soon—forgot :
 Her smiles and tears had pass'd, as light winds pass
 O'er lakes, to ruffle, not destroy, their glass,
 Whose depths unsearch'd, and fountains from the hill,
 Restore their surface, in itself so still,

Until the earthquake tear the naiad's cave,
Root up the spring, and trample on the wave,
And crush the living waters to a mass,
The amphibious desert of the dank morass !
And must their fate be hers? The eternal change
But grasps humanity with quicker range ;
And they who fall but fall as worlds will fall,
To rise, if just, a spirit o'er them all.

VIII.

And who is he? the blue-eyed northern child
Of isles more known to man, but scarce less wild ;
The fair-hair'd offspring of the Hebrides,
Where roars the Pentland with its whirling seas ;
Rock'd in his cradle by the roaring wind,
The tempest-born in body and in mind,
His young eyes opening on the ocean-foam,
Had from that moment deem'd the deep his home,
The giant comrade of his pensive moods,
The sharer of his craggy solitudes,
The only Mentor of his youth, where'er
His bark was borne ; the sport of wave and air ;
A careless thing, who placed his choice in chance,
Nursed by the legends of his land's romance ;
Eager to hope, but not less firm to bear,
Acquainted with all feelings save despair.
Placed in the Arab's clime, he would have been
As bold a rover as the sands have seen,
And braved their thirst with as enduring lip
As Ishmael, waited on his desert-ship ;
Fix'd upon Chili's shore, a proud cacique ;
On Hellas' mountains, a rebellious Greek ;
Born in a tent, perhaps a Tamerlane ;
Bred to a throne, perhaps unfit to reign.
For the same soul that rends its path to sway,
If rear'd to such, can find no further prey
Beyond itself, and must retrace its way,
Plunging for pleasure into pain : the same
Spirit which made a Nero, Rome's worst shame,
A humbler state and discipline of heart,
Had form'd his glorious namesake's counterpart ;
But grant his vices, grant them all his own,
How small their theatre without a throne !

IX.

Thou smilest :—these comparisons seem high
 To those who scan all things with dazzled eye ;
 Link'd with the unknown name of one whose doom
 Has nought to do with glory or with Rome,
 With Chili, Hellas, or with Araby ;—
 Thou smilest ?—Smile ; 't is better thus than sigh ;
 Yet such he might have been ; he **was** a man,
 A soaring spirit, ever in the van,
 A patriot hero or despotic chief,
 To form a nation's glory or its grief,
 Born under auspices which made us **more**
 Or less than we delight to ponder o'er.
 But these are visions ; say, what was he here ?
 A blooming boy, a truant mutineer.
 The fair-hair'd Torquil, free as ocean's spray,
 The husband of the bride of Toobonai.

X.

By Neuha's side he sate, and watch'd the waters,—
 Neuha, the sun-flower of the island daughters,
 Highborn (a birth at which the herald's tales,
 Without a scutcheon for these secret isles),
 Of a long race, the valiant and the free,
 The ~~mailed~~ knights of savage chivalry,
 Whose grassy cairns ascend along the shore ;
 And thine—I've seen—Achilles' do no more.
 She, when the thunder-bearing strangers came,
 In vast canoes, begirt with bolts of flame,
 Topp'd with tall trees, which, loftier than the palm,
 Seem'd rooted in the deep amidst its calm :
 But when the winds awaken'd, shot forth wings
 Broad as the cloud along the horizon flings,
 And sway'd the waves like cities of the sea,
 Making the very billows look less free ;—
 She, with her paddling oar and dancing prow,
 Shot through the surf, like reindeer through the snow,
 Swift-gliding o'er the breaker's whitening edge,
 Light as a nereid in her ocean sledge,
 And gazed and wonder'd at the giant hulk,
 Which heaved from wave to wave its trampling bulk,
 The anchor dropp'd ; it lay along the deep,
 Like a huge lion in the sun asleep,

While round it swarm'd the proas' fitting chain,
Like summer bees that hum around his mane.

XI.

The white man landed !—need the rest be told ?
The New World stretch'd its dusk hand to the Old ;
Each was to each a marvel, and the tie
Of wonder warm'd to better sympathy.
Kind was the welcome of the sun-born sires,
And kinder still their daughters' gentler fires.
Their union grew : the children of the storm
Found beauty link'd with many a dusky form ;
While these in turn admired the paler glow,
Which seem'd so white in climes that knew no snow.
The chase, the race, the liberty to roam,
The soil where every cottage show'd a home ;
The sea-spread net, the lightly launch'd canoe,
Which stemm'd the studded archipelago,
O'er whose blue bosom rose the starry isles ;
The healthy slumber, earn'd by sportive toils ;
The palm, the loftiest dryad of the woods,
Within whose bosom infant Bacchus broods,
While eagles scarce build higher than the crest
Which shadows o'er the vineyard in her breast ;
The cava feast, the yam, the cocoa's root,
Which bears at once the cup, and milk, and fruit ;
The bread-tree, which, without the ploughshare, yields
The uncreep'd harvest of unfurrow'd fields,
And bakes its unadulterated loaves
Without a furnace in unpurchased groves,
And flings off famine from its fertile breast,
A priceless market for the gathering guest ;—
These, with the luxuries of seas and woods,
The airy joys of social solitudes,
Tamed each rude wanderer to the sympathies
Of those who were more happy, if less wise,
Did more than Europe's discipline had done,
And civilis'd Civilization's son !

XII.

Of these, and there was many a willing pair,
Neuha and Torquil were not the least fair ;

Both children of the Isles, though distant far ;
Both born beneath a sea-presiding star ;
Both nourish'd amidst nature's native scenes,
Loved to the last, whatever intervenes
Between us and our childhood's sympathy,
Which still reverts to what first caught the eye.
He who first met the Highlands' swelling blue
Will love each peak that shows a kindred hue,
Hail in each crag a friend's familiar face,
And clasp the mountain in his mind's embrace.
Long have I roam'd through lands which are not mine,
Adored the Alp, and loved the Apennine,
Revered Parnassus, and beheld the steep
Jove's Ida and Olympus crown the deep :
But 't was not all long ages' lore, nor all
Their nature held me in their thrilling thrall ;
The infant rapture still survived the boy,
And Loch-na-gar with Ida look'd o'er Troy,
Mix'd Celtic memories with the Phrygian mount,
And Highland linns with Castalie's clear fount.
Forgive me, Homer's universal shade !
Forgive me, Phœbus ! that my fancy stray'd ;
The north and nature taught me to adore
Your scenes sublime, from those beloved before.

XIII.

The love which maketh all things fond and fair,
The youth which makes one rainbow of the air,
The dangers past, that make even man enjoy
The pause in which he ceases to destroy,
The mutual beauty, which the sternest feel
Strike to their hearts like lightning to the steel,
United the half savage and the whole,
The maid and boy, in one absorbing soul.
No more the thundering memory of the fight
Wrapp'd his wean'd bosom in its dark delight ;
No more the irksome restlessness of rest
Disturb'd him like the eagle in her nest,
Whose whetted beak and far-pervading eye
Darts for a victim over all the sky :
His heart was tamed to that voluptuous state,
At once Elysian and effeminate,

Which leaves no laurels o'er the hero's urn ;—
These wither when for aught save blood they burn ;
Yet when their ashes in their nook are laid,
Doth not the myrtle leave as sweet a shade ?
Had Cæsar known but Cleopatra's kiss,
Rome had been free, the world had not been his.
And what have Cæsar's deeds and Cæsar's fame
Done for the earth ? We feel them in our shame :
The gory sanction of his glory stains
The rust which tyrants cherish on our chains.
Though Glory, Nature, Reason, Freedom, bid
Roused millions do what single Brutus did—
Sweep these mere mock-birds of the despot's song
From the tall bough where they have perch'd so long,—
Still are we hawk'd at by such mousing owls,
And take for falcons those ignoble fowls,
When but a word of freedom would dispel
These bugbears, as their terrors show too well.

XIV.

Rapt in the fond forgetfulness of life,
Neuha, the South Sea girl, was all a wife,
With no distracting world to call her off
From love ; with no society to scoff
At the new transient flame ; no babbling crowd
Of coxcombry in admiration loud,
Or with adulterous whisper to alloy
Her duty, and her glory, and her joy :
With faith and feelings naked as her form,
She stood as stands a rainbow in a storm,
Changing its hues with bright variety,
But still expanding lovelier o'er the sky,
Howe'er its arch may swell, its colours move,
The cloud-compelling harbinger of love.

XV.

Here, in this grotto of the wave-worn shore,
They pass'd the tropic's red meridian o'er ;
Nor long the hours—they never paused o'er time,
Unbroken by the clock's funereal chime,
Which deals the daily pittance of our span,
And points and mocks with iron laugh at man.

What deem'd they of the future or the past?
 The present, like a tyrant, held them fast:
 Their hour-glass was the sea-sand, and the tide,
 Like her smooth billow, saw their moments glide;
 Their clock the sun, in his unbounded tow'r;
 They reckon'd not, whose day was but an hour;
 The nightingale, their only vesper-bell,
 Sung sweetly to the rose the day's farewell;
 The broad sun set, but not with lingering sweep,
 As in the north he mellows o'er the deep;
 But fiery, full, and fierce, as if he left
 The world for ever, earth and light bereft,
 Plunged with red forehead down along the wave,
 As dives a hero headlong to his grave.
 Then rose they, looking first along the skies,
 And then for light into each other's eyes,
 Wondering that summer show'd so brief a sun,
 And asking if indeed the day were done.

XVI.

And let not this seem strange: the devotee
 Lives not in earth, but in his ecstasy;
 Around him days and worlds are heedless driven,
 His soul is gone before his dust to heaven.
 Is love less potent? No—his path is trod,
 Alike uplifted gloriously to God;
 Or link'd to all we know of heaven below,
 The other better self, whose joy or woe
 Is more than ours; the all-absorbing flame
 Which, kindled by another, grows the same,
 Wrapt in one blaze; the pure, yet funeral pile,
 Where gentle hearts, like Bramins, sit and smile.
 How often we forget all time, when lone,
 Admiring Nature's universal throne,
 Her woods, her wilds, her waters, the intense
 Reply of *hers* to our intelligence!
 Live not the stars and mountains? Are the waves
 Without a spirit? Are the dropping caves
 Without a feeling in their silent tears?
 No, no;—they woo and clasp us to their spheres,
 Dissolve this clog and clod of clay before
 Its hour, and merge our soul in the great shore.

Strip off this fond and false identity !—
Who thinks of self when gazing on the sky?
And who, though gazing lower, ever thought,
In the young moments ere the heart is taught
Time's lesson, of man's baseness or his own?
All nature is his realm, and love his throne.

XVII.

Neuha arose, and Torquil : twilight's hour
Came sad and softly to their rocky bower,
Which, kindling by degrees its dewy spars,
Echoed their dim light to the mustering stars.
Slowly the pair, partaking nature's calm,
Sought out their cottage, built beneath the palm ;
Now smiling and now silent, as the scene ;
Lovely as Love—the spirit !—when serene.
The Ocean scarce spoke louder with his swell,
Than breathes his mimic murmur in the shell,
As, far divided from his parent deep,
The sea-born infant cries, and will not sleep,
Raising his little plaint in vain, to rave
For the broad bosom of his nursing wave :
The woods droop'd darkly, as inclined to rest,
The tropic bird wheel'd rockward to his nest,
And the blue sky spread round them like a lake
Of peace, where Piety her thirst might slake.

XVIII.

But through the palm and plantain, hark, a voice !
Not such as would have been a lover's choice, *
In such an hour, to break the air so still ;
No dying night-breeze, harping o'er the hill,
Striking the strings of nature, rock and tree,
Those best and earliest lyres of harmony,
With Echo for their chorus ; nor the alarm
Of the loud war-whoop to dispel the charm ;
Nor the soliloquy of the hermit owl,
Exhaling all his solitary soul,
The dim though large-eyed winged anchorite,
Who peals his dreary pæan o'er the night ;
But a loud, long, and naval whistle, shrill
As ever started through a sea bird's bill ;

And then a pause, and then a hoarse, "Hillo!
 Torquil, my boy! what cheer? Ho! brother, ho!"
 "Who hails?" cried Torquil, following with his eye
 The sound. "Here's one," was all the brief reply.

XIX.

But here the herald of the self-same mouth
 Came breathing o'er the aromatic south,
 Not like a "bed of violets" on the gale,
 But such as wafts its cloud o'er grog or ale,
 Borne from a short frail pipe, which yet had blown
 Its gentle odours over either zone,
 And, puff'd where'er winds rise or waters roll,
 Had wafted smoke from Portsmouth to the Pole,
 Opposed its vapour as the lightning flash'd,
 And reek'd, 'midst mountain-billows, unabash'd,
 To Æolus a constant sacrifice,
 Through every change of all the varying skies.
 And what was he who bore it?—I may err,
 But deem him sailor or philosopher.
 Sublime tobacco! which from east to west
 Cheers the tar's labour or the Turkman's rest;
 Which on the Moslem's ottoman divides
 His hours, and rivals opium and his brides;
 Magnificent in Stamboul, but less grand,
 Though not less loved, in Wapping or the Strand;
 Divine in hookas, glorious in a pipe,
 When tipp'd with amber, mellow, rich, and ripe;
 Like other charmers, wooing the caress,
 More dazzlingly when daring in full dress:
 Yet thy true lovers more admire by far
 'Thy naked beauties—Give me a cigar!

XX.

Through the approaching darkness of the wood
 A human figure broke the solitude,
 Fantastically, it may be, array'd,
 A seaman in a savage masquerade;
 Such as appears to rise out from the deep
 When o'er the line the merry vessels sweep,
 And the rough saturnalia of the tar
 Flock o'er the deck, in Neptune's borrow'd car,

And, pleased, the god of ocean sees his name
Revive once more, though but in mimic game
Of his true sons, who riot in the breeze
Undreamt of in his native Cyclades.
Still the old god delights, from out the main,
To snatch some glimpses of his ancient reign.
Our sailor's jacket, though in ragged trim,
His constant pipe, which never yet burn'd dim,
His foremost air, and somewhat rolling gait,
Like his dear vessel, spoke his former state ;
But then a sort of kerchief round his head,
Not over-tightly bound, nor nicely spread ;
And, 'stead of trowsers (ah ! too early torn !
For even the mildest woods will have their thorn),
A curious sort of somewhat scanty mat
Now served for inexpressibles and hat ;
His naked feet, and neck, and sunburnt face,
Perchance might suit alike with either race.
His arms were all his own, our Europe's growth,
Which two worlds bless for civilising both ;
The musket swung behind his shoulders, broad,
And somewhat stoop'd by his marine abode,
But brawny as the boar's ; and hung beneath,
His cutlass droop'd, unconscious of a sheath,
(Or lost or worn away ; his pistols were
Link'd to his belt, a matrimonial pair—
(Let not this metaphor appear a scoff,
Though one miss'd fire, the other would go off) ;
These, with a bayonet, not so free from rust
As when the arm-chest held its brighter trust,
Completed his accoutrements, as Night
Survey'd him in his garb heteroclite.

XXI.

"What cheer, Ben Bunting?" cried (when in full view
Our new acquaintance) Torquil. "Aught of new?"
"Ey, ey!" quoth Ben, "not new, but news enow;
A strange sail in the offing."—"Sail! and how?
What! could you make her out? It cannot be;
I've seen no rag of canvas on the sea."
"Belike," said Ben, "you might not from the bay,
But from the bluff-head, where I watch'd to-day,

I saw her in the doldrums : for the wind
 Was light and baffling."—"When the sun declined
 Where lay she ? had she anchor'd ?"—"No, but still
 She bore down on us, till the wind grew still."
 "Her flag ?"—"I had no glass : but fore and aft,
 Egad ! she seem'd a wicked-looking craft."
 "Arm'd ?"—"I expect so ;—sent on the look-out :
 'T is time, belike, to put our helm about."
 "About ?—Whate'er may have us now in chase,
 We'll make no running fight, for that were base ;
 We will die at our quarters, like true men."
 "Ey, ey ! for that 't is all the same to Ben."
 "Does Christian know this ?"—"Ay ; he has piped all
 hands
 To quarters. They are furbishing the stands
 Of arms ; and we have got some guns to bear,
 And scaled them. You are wanted."—"That's but fair ;
 And if it were not, mine is not the soul
 To leave my comrades helpless on the shoal.
 My Neuha ! ah ! and must my fate pursue
 Not me alone, but one so sweet and true ?
 But whatsoe'er betide, ah, Neuha ! now
 Urnman me not ; the hour will not allow
 A tear ; I'm thine whatever intervenes !"
 "Right," quoth Ben ; "that will do for the marines."

CANTO THE THIRD.

I.

THE fight was o'er ; the flashing through the gloom,
 Which robes the cannon as he wings a tomb,
 Had ceased ; and sulphury vapours upward driven
 Had left the earth, and but polluted heaven :
 The rattling roar which rung in every volley
 Had left the echoes to their melancholy ;
 No more they shriek'd their horror, boom for boom ;
 The strife was done, the vanquish'd had their doom ;
 The mutineers were crush'd, dispersed, or ta'en,
 Or lived to deem the happiest were the slain.
 Few, few escaped, and these were hunted o'er

The isle they lov'd beyond their native shore.
No further home was theirs, it seem'd, on earth,
Once renegades to that which gave them birth ;
Track'd like wild beasts, like them they sought the wild,
As to a mother's bosom flies the child ;
But vainly wolves and lions seek their den,
And still more vainly men escape from men.

II.

Beneath a rock whose jutting base protrudes
Far over ocean in its fiercest mood,
When scaling this enormous crag the wave
Is hurl'd down headlong like the foremost brave,
And falls back on the foaming crowd behind,
Which fight beneath the banners of the wind,
But now at rest, a little remnant drew
Together, bleeding, thirsty, faint, and few ;
But still their weapons in their hands, and still
With something of the pride of former will,
As men not all unused to meditate,
And strive much more than wonder at their fate
Their present lot was what they had foreseen,
And dared as what was likely to have been ;
Yet still the lingering hope, which deem'd their lot
Not pardon'd, but unsought for or forgot,
Or trusted that, if sought, their distant caves
Might still be miss'd amidst the world of waves,
Had wean'd their thoughts in part from what they saw
And felt, the vengeance of their country's law.
Their sea-green isle, their guilt-won paradise,
No more could shield their virtue or their vice :
Their better feelings, if such were, were thrown
Back on themselves,—their sins remain'd alone.
Proscribed even in their second country, they
Were lost ; in vain the world before them lay ;
All outlets seem'd secured. Their new allies
Had fought and bled in mutual sacrifice ;
But what avail'd the club and spear, and arm
Of Hercules, against the sulphury charm,
The magic of the thunder, which destroy'd
The warrior ere his strength could be employ'd ?
Dug, like a spreading pestilence, the grave
No less of human bravery than the brave !

Their own scant numbers acted all the few
 Against the many oft will dare and do ;
 But though the choice seems native to die free,
 Even Greece can boast but one Thermopylæ,
 Till *now*, when she has forged her broken chain
 Back to a sword, and dies and lives again !

III.

Beside the jutting rock the few appear'd,
 Like the last remnant of the red-deer's herd ;
 Their eyes were feverish, and their aspect worn, .
 But still the hunter's blood was on their horn.
 A little stream came tumbling from the height,
 And straggling into ocean as it might,
 Its bounding crystal frolick'd in the ray,
 And gush'd from cliff to crag with saltless spray :
 Close on the wild, wide ocean, yet as pure
 And fresh as innocence, and more secure,
 Its silver torrent glitter'd o'er the deep,
 As the shy chamois' eye o'erlooks the steep,
 While far below the vast and sullen swell
 Of ocean's alpine azure rose and fell.
 To this young spring they rush'd,—all feelings first
 Absorb'd in passion's and in nature's thirst,—
 Drank as they do who drink their last, and threw
 Their arms aside to revel in its dew ;
 Cool'd their scorch'd throats, and wash'd the gory stains
 From wounds whose only bandage might be chains ;
 Then, when their drought was quench'd, look'd sadly
 round,
 As wondering how so many still were found
 Alive and fetterless :—but silent all,
 Each sought his fellow's eyes, as if to call
 On him for language which his lips denied,
 As though their voices with their cause had died.

IV.

Stern, and aloof a little from the rest,
 Stood Christian, with his arms across his chest.
 The ruddy, reckless, dauntless hue once spread
 Along his cheek was livid now as lead ;
 His light-brown locks, so graceful in their flow,
 Now rose like startled vipers o'er his brow.

Still as a statue, with his lips comprest
 To stifle even the breath within his breast,
 Fast by the rock, all menacing, but mute,
 He stood ; and, save a slight beat of his foot,
 Which deepen'd now and then the sandy dint
 Beneath his heel, his form seem'd turn'd to flint.
 Some paces further Torquil lean'd his head
 Against a bank, and spoke not, but he bled,—
 Not mortally:—his worst wound was within ;
 His brow was pale, his blue eyes sunken in,
 And blood-drops, sprinkled o'er his yellow hair,
 Show'd that his faintness came not from despair,
 But nature's ebb. Beside him was another,
 Rough as a bear, but willing as a brother,—
 Ben Bunting, who essay'd to wash, and wipe,
 And bind his wound—then calmly lit his pipe,
 A trophy which survived a hundred fights,
 A beacon which had cheer'd ten thousand nights.
 The fourth and last of this deserted group
 Walk'd up and down—at times would stand, then stoop
 To pick a pebble up—then let it drop—
 Then hurry as in haste—then quickly stop—
 Then cast his eyes on his companions—then
 Half whistle half a tune, and pause again—
 And then his former movements would redouble,
 With something between carelessness and trouble.
 This is a long description, but applies
 To scarce five minutes pass'd before the eyes ;
 But yet *what* minutes ! Moments like to these
 Rend men's lives into immortalities.

V.

At length Jack Skyscape, a mercurial man,
 Who flutter'd over all things like a fan,
 More brave than firm, and more disposed to dare
 And die at once than wrestle with despair,
 Exclaim'd, "G—d damn !"—those syllables intense,—
 Nucleus of England's native eloquence,
 As the Turk's "Allah" or the Roman's more
 Pagan "Proh Jupiter !" was wont of yore
 To give their first impressions such a vent,
 By way of echo to embarrassment.

Jack was embarrass'd,—never hero more,
 And as he knew not what to say, he swore :
 Nor swore in vain ; the long congenial sound
 Revived Ben Bunting from his pipe profound ;
 He drew it from his mouth, and look'd full wise,
 But merely added to the oath his *eyes* ;
 Thus rendering the imperfect phrase complete,
 A peroration I need not repeat.

VI.

But Christian, of a higher order, stood
 Like an extinct volcano in his mood ;
 Silent, and sad, and savage,—with the trace
 Of passion reeking from his clouded face ;
 Till lifting up again his sombre eye,
 It glanced on Torquil, who lean'd faintly by.
 “ And is it thus ? ” he cried, “ unhappy boy !
 And thee, too, *thee*—my madness must destroy ! ”
 He said, and strode to where young Torquil stood,
 Yet dabbled with his lately flowing blood ;
 Seized his hand wistfully, but did not press,
 And shrunk as fearful of his own caress ;
 Inquired into his state ; and when he heard
 The wound was slighter than he deem'd or fear'd,
 A moment's brightness pass'd along his brow,
 As much as such a moment would allow.
 “ Yes,” he exclaim'd, “ we're taken in the toil,
 But not a coward or a common spoil ;
 Dearly they've bought us—dearly still may buy,—
 And I must fall ; but have you strength to fly ?
 'T would be some comfort still, could you survive :
 Our dwindled band is now too few to strive.
 Oh ! for a sole canoe ! though but a shell,
 To bear you hence to where a hope may dwell ;
 For me, my lot is what I sought ; to be,
 In life or death, the fearless and the free.”

VII.

Even as he spoke, around the promontory,
 Which nodded o'er the billows high and hoary,
 A dark speck dotted ocean : on it flew
 Like to the shadow of a roused sea-mew ;

Onward it came—and, lo ! a second follow'd—
Now seen—now hid—where ocean's vale was hollow'd ;
And near, and nearer, till their dusky crew
Presented well-known aspects to the view,
Till on the surf their skimming paddles play,
Buoyant as wings, and flitting through the spray ;—
Now perching on the wave's high curl, and now
Dash'd downward in the thundering foam below,
Which flings it broad and boiling sheet on sheet,
And slings its high flakes, shiver'd into sleet :
But floating still through surf and swell, drew nigh
The barks, like small birds through a lowering sky.
Their art seem'd nature—such the skill to sweep
The wave of these born playmates of the deep.

VIII.

And who the first that, springing on the strand,
Leap'd like a nereid from her shell to land,
With dark but brilliant skin, and dewy eye
Shining with love, and hope, and constancy ?
Neuha—the fond, the faithful, the adored—
Her heart on Torquil's like a torrent pour'd ;
And smiled, and wept, and near and nearer clasp'd,
As if to be assured 't was *him* she grasp'd ;
Shudder'd to see his yet warm wound, and then,
To find it trivial, smiled and wept again.
She was a warrior's daughter, and could bear
Such sights, and feel, and mourn, but not despair.
Her lover lived,—nor foes nor fears could blight
That full-blown moment in its all delight :
Joy trickled in her tears, joy fill'd the sob
That rock'd her heart till almost heard to throb ;
And paradise was breathing in the sigh
Of nature's child in nature's ecstasy.

IX.

The sterner spirits who beheld that meeting
Were not unmoved ; who are, when hearts are greeting ?
Even Christian gazed upon the maid and boy
With tearless eye, but yet a gloomy joy
Mix'd with those bitter thoughts the soul arrays
In hopeless visions of our better days,

When all's gone—to the rainbow's latest ray,
"And but for me!" he said, and turn'd away;
Then gazed upon the pair, as in his den
A lion looks upon his cubs again;
And then relapsed into his sullen guise,
As heedless of his further destinies.

X.

But brief their time for good or evil thought;
The billows round the promontory brought
The splash of hostile oars.—Alas! who made
That sound a dread? All around them seem'd array'd
Against them, save the bride of Toobonai:
She, as she caught the first glimpse o'er the bay
Of the arm'd boats, which hurried to complete
The remnant's ruin with their flying feet,
Beckon'd the natives round her to their prows,
Embark'd their guests and launch'd their light canoes,
In one placed Christian and his comrades twain;
But she and Torquil must not part again.
She fix'd him in her own.—Away! away!
They clear the breakers, dart along the bay,
And towards a group of islets, such as bear
The sea-bird's nest and seal's surf-hollow'd lair,
They skim the blue tops of the billows; fast
They flew, and fast their fierce pursuers chased.
They gain upon them—now they lose again,—
Again make way and menace o'er the main;
And now the two canoes in chase divide,
And follow different courses o'er the tide,
To baffle the pursuit.—Away! away!
As life is on each paddle's flight to-day,
And more than life or lives to Neuha: Love
Freights the frail bark and urges to the cove;
And now the refuge and the foe are nigh—
Yet, yet a moment: Fly, thou light ark, fly!

CANTO THE FOURTH.

I.

WHITE as a white sail on a dusky sea,
When half the horizon's clouded and half free,
Fluttering between the dun wave and the sky,
Is hope's last gleam in man's extremity.
Her anchor parts ! but still her snowy sail
Attracts our eye amidst the rudest gale :
Though every wave she climbs divides us more,
The heart still follows from the loneliest shore.

II.

Not distant from the isle of Toobonai,
A black rock rears its bosom o'er the spray,
The haunt of birds, a desert to mankind,
Where the rough seal reposes from the wind,
And sleeps unwieldy in his cavern dun,
Or gambols with huge frolic in the sun :
There shrilly to the passing oar is heard
The startled echo of the ocean bird,
Who rears on its bare breast her callow brood,
The feather'd fishers of the solitude.
A narrow segment of the yellow sand
On one side forms the outline of a strand ;
Here the young turtle, crawling from his shell,
Steals to the deep wherein his parents dwell ;
Chipp'd by the beam, a nursling of the day,
But hatch'd for ocean by the fostering ray ;
The rest was one bleak precipice, as e'er
Gave mariners a shelter and despair ;
A spot to make the saved regret the deck
Which late went down, and envy the lost wreck.
Such was the stern asylum Neuha chose
To shield her lover from his following foes ;
But all its secret was not told ; she knew
In this a treasure hidden from the view.

III.

Ere the canoes divided, near the spot,
The men that mann'd what held her Torquil's lot,

By her command removed, to strengthen more
The skiff which wafted Christian from the shore.
This he would have opposed ; but with a smile
She pointed calmly to the craggy isle,
And bade him " speed and prosper." *She* would take
The rest upon herself for Torquil's sake.
They parted with this added aid ; afar
The proa darted like a shooting star,
And gain'd on the pursuers, who now steer'd
Right on the rock which she and Torquil near'd.
They pull'd ; her arm, though delicate, was free
And firm as ever grappled with the sea,
And yielded scarce to Torquil's manlier strength.
The prow now almost lay within its length
Of the crag's steep, inexorable face,
With nought but soundless waters for its base ;
Within a hundred boats' length was the foe,
And now what refuge but their frail canoe ?
This Torquil ask'd with half upbraiding eye,
Which said—" Has Neuha brought me here to die ?
Is this a place of safety, or a grave,
And yon huge rock the tombstone of the wave ? "

IV.

They rested on their paddles, and uprose
Neuha, and pointing to the approaching foes,
Cried, " Torquil, follow me, and fearless follow ! "
Then plunged at once into the ocean's hollow.
There was no time to pause—the foes were near—
Chains in his eye, and menace in his ear ;
With vigour they pull'd on, and as they came,
Hail'd him to yield, and by his forfeit name.
Headlong he leapt—to him the swimmer's skill
Was native, and now all his hope from ill :
But how, or where ? He dived, and rose no more ;
The boat's crew look'd amazed o'er sea and shore.
There was no landing on that precipice,
Steep, harsh, and slippery as a berg of ice.
They watch'd awhile to see him float again,
But not a trace rebubbled from the main :
The wave roll'd on, no ripple on its face,
Since their first plunge, recall'd a single trace ;

The little whirl which eddied, and slight foam,
That whiten'd o'er what seem'd their latest home,
White as a sepulchre above the pair
Who left no marble (mournful as an heir),
The quiet proa wavering o'er the tide
Was all that told of Torquil and his bride ;
And but for this alone the whole might seem
The vanish'd phantom of a seaman's dream.
They paused and search'd in vain, then pull'd away ;
Every superstition now forbade their stay.
Some said he had not plunged into the wave,
But vanish'd like a corpse-light from a grave ;
Others, that something supernatural
Glared in his figure, more than mortal tall ;
While all agreed that in his cheek and eye
There was a dead hue of eternity.
Still as their oars receded from the crag,
Round every weed a moment would they lag,
Expectant of some token of their prey ;
But no—he had melted from them like the spray.

V.

And where was he the pilgrim of the deep,
Following the nereid? Had they ceased to weep
For ever? or, received in coral caves,
Wrung life and pity from the softening waves?
Did they with ocean's hidden sovereigns dwell,
And sound with mermen the fantastic shell?
Did Neuha with the mermaids comb her hair
Flowing o'er ocean as it stream'd in air?
Or had they perish'd, and in silence slept
Beneath the gulf wherein they boldly leapt?

VI.

Young Neuha plunged into the deep, and he
Follow'd: her track beneath her native sea
Was as a native's of the element,
So smoothly, bravely,*brilliantly she went,
Leaving a streak of light behind her heel,
Which struck and flash'd like an amphibious steel.
Closely, and scarcely less expert* to trace
The depths where divers hold the pearl in chase,

Torquil, the nursling of the northern seas,
 Pursued her liquid steps with heart and ease.
 Deep—deeper for an instant Neuha led
 The way—then upward soar'd—and as she spread
 Her arms, and flung the foam from off her locks,
 Laugh'd, and the sound was answer'd by the rocks,
 They had gain'd a central realm of earth again,
 But look'd for tree, and field, and sky, in vain.
 Around she pointed to a spacious cave,
 Whose only portal was the keyless wave,
 (A hollow archway by the sun unseen,
 Save through the billows' glassy veil of green,
 In some transparent ocean holiday,
 When all the finny people are at play,)
 Wiped with her hair the brine from Torquil's eyes,
 And clapp'd her hands with joy at his surprise;
 Led him to where the rock appear'd to jut,
 And form a something like a Triton's hut;
 For all was darkness for a space, till day,
 Through clefts above let in a sober'd ray;
 As in some old cathedral's glimmering aisle
 The dusty monuments from light recoil,
 Thus sadly in their refuge submarine
 The vault drew half her shadow from the scene.

VII.

Forth from her bosom the young savage drew
 A pine torch, strongly girded with gnato; ;
 A plantain-leaf o'er all, the more to keep
 Its latent sparkle from the sapping deep.
 This mantle kept it dry; then from a nook
 Of the same plantain-leaf a flint she took,
 A few shrunk wither'd twigs, and from the blade
 Of Torquil's knife struck fire, and thus array'd
 The grot with torchlight. Wide it was and high,
 And show'd a self-born Gothic canopy;
 The arch uprear'd by nature's architect,
 The architrave some earthquake might erect;
 The buttress from some mountain's bosom hurl'd,
 When the Poles crash'd, and water was the world;
 Or harden'd from some earth-absorbing fire,
 While yet the globe reek'd from its funeral pyre;

The fretted pinnacle, the aisle, the nave,
Were there, all scoop'd by Darkness from her cave.
There, with a little tinge of phantasy,
Fantastic faces mop'd and mow'd on high,
And then a mitre or a shrine would fix
The eye upon its seeming crucifix.
Thus Nature play'd with the stalactites,
And built herself a chapel of the seas.

VIII.

And Neuha took her Torquil by the hand,
And waved along the vault her kindled brand,
And led him into each recess, and show'd
The secret places of their new abode.
Nor these alone, for all had been prepared
Before, to soothe the lover's lot she shared :
The mat for rest ; for dress the fresh gnato, .
And sandal oil to fence against the dew ;
For food the cocoa-nut, the yam, the bread
Born of the fruit ; for board the plantain spread
With its broad leaf, or turtle-shell which bore
A banquet in the flesh it cover'd o'er ;
The gourd with water recent from the rill,
The ripe banana from the mellow hill ;
A pine-torch pile to keep undying light,
And she herself as beautiful as night,
To fling her shadowy spirit o'er the scene,
And make their subterranean world serene.
She had foreseen, since first the stranger's sail
Drew to their isle, that force or flight might fail,
And form'd a refuge of the rocky den
For Torquil's safety from his countrymen.
Each dawn had wafted there her light canoe,
Laden with all the golden fruits that grew ;
Each eve had seen her gliding through the hour
With all could cheer or deck their sparry bower ;
And now she spread her little store with smiles,
The happiest daughter of the loving isles.

IX.

She, as he gazed with grateful wonder, press'd
Her shelter'd love to her impassion'd breast ;

And suited to her soft caresses, told
An olden tale of love,—for love is old,
Old as eternity, but not outworn
With each new being born or to be born :
How a young chief, a thousand moons ago,
Diving for turtle in the depths below,
Had risen, in tracking fast his ocean prey,
Into the cave which round and o'er them lay ;
How in some desperate feud of after-time
He shelter'd there a daughter of the clime,
A foe beloved, and offspring of a foe,
Saved by his tribe but for a captive's woe ;
How, when the storm of war was still'd, he led
His island clan to where the waters spread
Their deep-green shadow o'er the rocky door,
Then dived—it seem'd as if to rise no more :
His wondering mates, amazed within their bark,
Or deem'd him mad, or prey to the blue shark ;
Row'd round in sorrow the sea-girded rock,
Then paused upon their paddles from the shock ;
When, fresh and springing from the deep, they saw
A goddess rise—so deem'd they in their awe ;
And their companion, glorious by her side,
Proud and exulting in his mermaid bride :
And how, when undeceived, the pair they bore
With sounding conchs and joyous shouts to shore ;
How they had gladly lived and calmly died,
And why not also Torquil and his bride ?
Not mine to tell the rapturous caress
Which follow'd wildly in that wild recess
This tale ; enough that all within that cave
Was love, though buried strong as in the grave
Where Abelard, through twenty years of death,
When Eloïsa's form was lower'd beneath
Their nuptial vault, his arms outstretch'd, and press'd
The kindling ashes to his kindled breast.
The waves without sang round their couch, their roar
As much unheeded as if life were o'er ;
Within, their hearts made all their harmony,
Love's broken murmur and more broken sigh.

X.

And they, the cause and sharers of the shock
Which left them exiles of the hollow rock,
Where were they? O'er the sea for life they plied,
To seek from Heaven the shelter men denied.
Another course had been their choice—but where?
The wave which bore them still their foes would bear,
Who, disappointed of their former chase,
In search of Christian now renew'd their race.
Eager with anger, their strong arms made way,
Like vultures baffled of their previous prey.
They gain'd upon them, all whose safety lay
In some bleak crag or deeply-hidden bay:
No further chance or choice remain'd; and right
For the first further rock which met their sight
They steer'd, to take their latest view of land,
And yield as victims, or die sword in hand;
Dismiss'd the natives and their shallop, who
Would still have battled for that scanty crew;
But Christian bade them seek their shore again,
Nor add a sacrifice which were in vain;
For what were simple bow and savage spear
Against the arms which must be wielded here?

XI.

They landed on a wild but narrow scene,
Where few but Nature's footsteps yet had been;
Prepared their arms, and with that gloomy eye,
Stern and sustain'd, of man's extremity,
When hope is gone, nor glory's self remains
To cheer resistance against death or chains,—
They stood, the three, as the three hundred stood
Who dy'd Thermopylæ with holy blood.
But, ah! how different! 't is the *cause* makes all,
Degrades or halows courage in its fall.
O'er them no fame, eternal and intense,
Blazed through the clouds of death and beckon'd hence;
No grateful country, smiling through her tears,
Begun the praises of a thousand years;
No nation's eye would on their tomb be bent,
No heroes envy them their monument;

However boldly their warm blood was spilt,
Their life was shame, their epitaph was guilt.
And this they knew and felt, at least the one,
The leader of the band he had undone ;
Who, born perchance for better things, had set
His life upon a cast which linger'd yet :
But now the die was to be thrown, and all
The chances were in favour of his fall :
And such a fall ! But still he faced the shock,
Obdurate as a portion of the rock
Whereon he stood, and fix'd his levell'd gun,
Dark as a sullen cloud before the sun,

XII.

The boat drew nigh, well arm'd and firm the crew
To act whatever duty bade them do ;
Careless of danger, as the onward wind
Is of the leaves it strews, nor looks behind.
And yet perhaps they rather wish'd to go
Against a nation's than a native foe,
And felt that this poor victim of self-will,
Briton no more, had once been Britain's still.
They hail'd him to surrender—no reply ;
Their arms were poised, and glitter'd in the sky.
They hail'd again—no answer ; yet once more
They offer'd quarter louder than before.
The echoes only, from the rock's rebound,
Took their last farewell of the dying sound.
Then flash'd the flint, and blazed the volleying flame,
And the smoke rose between them and their aim,
While the rock rattled with the bullets' knell,
Which peal'd in vain, and flatten'd as they fell ;
Then flew the only answer to be given
By those who had lost all hope in earth or heaven.
After the first fierce peal, as they pull'd nigher,
They heard the voice of Christian shout, " Now, fire !"
And ere the word upon the echo died,
Two fell ; the rest assail'd the rock's rough side,
And, furious at the madness of their foes,
Disdain'd all further efforts, save to close.
But steep the crag, and all without a path,
Each step opposed a bastion to their wrath,
While, placed 'midst clefts the least accessible,

Which Christian's eye was train'd to mark full well,
'The three maintain'd a strife which must not yield,
In spots where eagles might have chosen to build.
Their every shot told ; while the assailant fell,
Dash'd on the shingles like the limpet shell ;
But still enough survived, and mounted still,
Scattering their numbers here and there, until
Surrounded and commanded, though not nigh
Enough for seizure, near enough to die,
The desperate trio held aloof their fate
But by a thread, like sharks who've gorged the bait ;
Yet to the very last they battled well,
And not a groan inform'd their foes *who* fell.
Christian died last—twice wounded ; and once more
Mercy was offer'd when they saw his gore ;
Too late for life, but not too late to die,
With, though a hostile hand, to close his eye.
A limb was broken, and he droop'd along .
The crag, as doth a falcon rest of young.
The sound revived him, or appear'd to wake
Some passion which a weakly gesture spake :
He beckon'd to the foremost, who drew nigh,
But, as they near'd, he rear'd his weapon high—
His last ball had been aim'd, but from his breast
He tore the topmost button from his vest,
Down the tube dash'd it, levell'd, fired, and smiled
As his foe fell ; then, like a serpent, coil'd
His wounded, weary form, to where the steep
Look'd desperate as himself along the deep ;
Cast one glance back, and clench'd his hand, and shook
His last rage 'gainst the earth which he forsook ;
Then plunged : the rock below received like glass
His body crush'd into one gory mass,
With scarce a shred to tell of human form,
Or fragment for the sea-bird or the worm ;
A fair-hair'd scalp, besmear'd with blood and weeds,
Yet reck'd, the remnant of himself and deeds ;
Some splinters of his weapons (to the last,
As long as hand could hold, he held them fast)
Yet glitter'd, but at distance—hurl'd away
To rust beneath the dew and dashing spray.
The rest was nothing—save a life mis-spent,
And soul—but who shall answer where it went?

'T is ours to bear, not judge the dead ; and they
 Who doom to hell, themselves are on the way, '
 Unless these bullies of eternal pains
 Are pardon'd their bad hearts for their worse brains.

XIII.

The deed was over ! All were gone or ta'en,
 The fugitive, the captive, or the slain.
 Chain'd on the deck, where once, a gallant crew,
 They stood with honour, were the wretched few
 Survivors of the skirmish on the isle ;
 But the last rock left no surviving spoil.
 Cold lay they where they fell, and weltering,
 While o'er them flapp'd the sea-birds' dewy wing,
 Now wheeling nearer from the neighbouring surge,
 And screaming high their harsh and hungry dirge :
 But calm and careless heaved the wave below,
 Eternal with unsympathetic flow ;
 Far o'er its face the dolphins sported on,
 And sprung the flying fish against the sun,
 Till its dried wing relapsed from its brief height,
 To gather moisture for another flight.

XIV.

'T was morn ; and Neuha, who by dawn of day
 Swam smoothly forth to catch the rising ray,
 And watch if aught approach'd the amphibious lair
 Where lay her lover, saw a sail in air :
 It flapp'd, it fill'd, and to the growing gale
 Bent its broad arch : her breath began to fail
 With fluttering fear, her heart beat thick and high,
 While yet a doubt sprung where its course might lie.
 But no ! it came not ; fast and far away
 The shadow lessen'd as it clear'd the bay.
 She gazed and flung the sea-foam from her eyes,
 To watch as for a rainbow in the skies.
 On the horizon verged the distant deck,
 Diminish'd, dwindled to a very speck—
 Then vanish'd. All was ocean, all was joy !
 Down plunged she through the cave to rouse her boy ;
 Told all she had seen, and all she hoped, and all
 That happy love could augur or recall ;

• Sprung forth again, with Torquil following free
His bounding nereid over the broad sea ;
Swam round the rock, to where a shallow cleft
Hid the canoe that Neuha there had left
Drifting along the tide, without an oar,
That eve the strangers chased them from the shore ;
But when these vanish'd, she pursued her prow,
Regain'd, and urg'd to where they found it now :
Nor ever did more love and joy embark,
Than now were wafted in that slender ark.

• XV. •

Again their own shore rises on the view,
No more polluted with a hostile hue ;
No sullen ship lay bristling o'er the foam,
A floating dungeon :—all was hope and home !
A thousand proas darted o'er the bay,
With sounding shells, and heralded their way ;
The chiefs came down, around the people pour'd,
And welcomed Torquil as a son restored ;
The women throng'd, embracing and embraced
By Neuha, asking where they had been chased,
And how escaped ? The tale was told ; and then
One acclamation rent the sky again ;
And from that hour a new tradition gave
Their sanctuary the name of " Neuha's Cave."
A hundred fires, far flickering from the height,
Blazed o'er the general revel of the night,
The feast in honour of the guest, return'd
To peace and pleasure, perilously earn'd ;
A night succeeded by such happy days
As only the yet infant world displays.

Dramas.

MANFRED: A DRAMATIC POEM.

“There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.”

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MANFRED.
CHAMOIS HUNTER.
ABBOT OF ST. MAURICE.
MANUEL.
HERMAN.

WITCH OF THE ALPS.
ARIMANES.
NEMESIS.
THE DESTINIES.
SPIRITS, &c.

The Scene of the Drama is amongst the higher Alps—partly in the Castle of Manfred, and partly in the Mountains.

ACT. I.

SCENE I.—MANFRED *alone*.—*Scene, a Gothic Gallery.—
Time, Midnight.*

Man. THE lamp must be replenish'd, but even then
It will not burn so long as I must watch :
My slumbers—if I slumber—are not sleep,
But a continuance of enduring thought,
Which then I can resist not : in my heart
There is a vigil, and these eyes but close
To look within ; and yet I live, and bear
The aspect and the form of breathing men.
But grief should be the instructor of the wise ;

Sorrow is knowledge ; they who know the most
Must mourn the deepest o'er the fatal truth,
The tree of Knowledge is not that of Life.
Philosophy and science, and the springs
Of wonder, and the wisdom of the world,
I have essay'd, and in my mind there is
A power to make these subject to itself—
But they avail not : I have done men good,
And I have met with good even among men—
But this avail'd not : I have had my foes,
And none have baffled, many fallen before me—
But this avail'd not :—Good, or evil, life,
Powers, passions, all I see in other beings,
Have been to me as rain unto the sands,
Since that all-nameless hour. I have no dread,
And feel the curse to have no natural fear,
Nor fluttering throb, that beats with hopes or wishes,
Or lurking love of something on the earth.
Now to my task.—

Mysterious agency !

Ye spirits of the unbounded Universe !
Whom I have sought in darkness and in light—
Ye, who do compass earth about, and dwell
In subtler essence—ye, to whom the tops
Of mountains inaccessible are haunts,
And earth's and ocean's caves familiar things—
I call upon ye by the written charm
Which gives me power upon you—Rise ! Appear !
[*A pause.*] They come not yet.—Now by the voice of him
Who is the first among you—by this sign,
Which makes you tremble—by the claims of him
Who is undying,—Rise ! Appear !—Appear !
[*A pause.*] If it be so—Spirits of earth and air,
Ye shall not thus elude me : by a power,
Deeper than all yet urged, a tyrant-spell,
Which had its birthplace in a star condemn'd,
The burning wreck of a demolish'd world,
A wandering hell in the eternal space ;
By the strong curse which is upon my soul,
The thought which is within me and around me,
I do compel ye to my will—Appear !

[*A star is seen at the darker end of the gallery, it is stationary ;
and a voice is heard singing.*]

FIRST SPIRIT.

Mortal ! to thy bidding bow'd,
From my mansion in the cloud,
Which the breath of twilight builds,
And the summer's sunset gilds
With the azure and vermillion,
Which is mix'd for my pavilion ;
Though thy quest may be forbidden,
On a star-beam I have ridden :
To thine adjuration bow'd,
Mortal—be thy wish avow'd !

Voice of the SECOND SPIRIT.

Mont Blanc is the monarch of mountains ;
They crown'd him long ago
On a throne of rocks, in a robe of clouds,
With a diadem of snow.
Around his waist are forests braced,
The Avalanche in his hand ;
But ere it fall, that thundering ball
Must pause for my command.
The Glacier's cold and restless mass
Moves onward day by day ;
But I am he who bids it pass,
Or with its ice delay.
I am the spirit of the place,
Could make the mountain bow
And quiver to its cavern'd base—
And what with me wouldst *Thou* ?

Voice of the THIRD SPIRIT.

In the blue depth of the waters,
Where the wave hath no strife,
Where the wind is a stranger,
And the sea-snake hath life,
Where the Mermaid is decking
Her green hair with shells,
Like the storm on the surface
Came the sound of thy spells ;

O'er my calm Hall of Coral
The deep echo roll'd—
To the Spirit of Ocean
Thy wishes unfold !

FOURTH SPIRIT.

Where the slumbering earthquake
Lies pillow'd on fire,
And the lakes of bitumen
Rise boilingly higher ;
Where the roots of the Andes
Strike deep in the earth,
As their summits to heaven
Shoot soaringly forth ;
I have quitted my birthplace,
Thy bidding to bide—
Thy spell hath subdued me,
Thy will be my guide !

FIFTH SPIRIT.

I am the Rider of the wind,
The Stirrer of the storm ;
The hurricane I left behind
Is yet with lightning warm ;
To speed to thee, o'er shore and sea
I swept upon the blast :
The fleet I met sail'd well, and yet
'T will sink ere night be past.

SIXTH SPIRIT.

My dwelling is the shadow of the night,
Why doth thy magic torture me with light ?

SEVENTH SPIRIT.

The star which rules thy destiny
Was ruled, ere earth began, by me :
It was a world as fresh and fair
As e'er revolved round sun in air ;
Its course was free and regular,
Space bosom'd not a lovelier star.
The hour arrived—and it became
A wandering mass of shapeless flame,

A pathless comet, and a curse,
 The menace of the universe;
 Still rolling on with innate force,
 Without a sphere, without a course,
 A bright deformity on high,
 The monster of the upper sky!
 And thou! beneath its influence born—
 Thou worm! whom I obey and scorn—
 Forced by a power (which is not thine,
 And lent thee but to make thee mine)
 For this brief moment to descend,
 Where these weak spirits round thee bend
 And parley with a thing like thee—
 What wouldst thou, Child of Clay! with me?

The SEVEN SPIRITS.

Earth, ocean, air, night, mountains, winds, thy star,
 Are at thy beck and bidding, Child of Clay!
 Before thee at thy quest their spirits are—
 What wouldst thou with us, son of mortals—say?

Man. Forgetfulness—

First Spirit. Of what—of whom—and why?

Man. Of that which is within me; read it there—
 Ye know it, and I cannot utter it.

Spirit. We can but give thee that which we possess:
 Ask of us subjects, sovereignty, the power
 O'er earth—the whole, or portion—or a sign
 Which shall control the elements, whereof
 We are the dominators,—each and all,
 These shall be thine.

Man. Oblivion, self-oblivion!
 Can ye not wring from out the hidden realms
 Ye offer so profusely what I ask?

Spirit. It is not in our essence, in our skill;
 But—thou may'st die.

Man. Will death bestow it on me?

Spirit. We are immortal, and do not forget;
 We are eternal; and to us the past
 Is, as the future, present. Art thou answer'd? [here

Man. Ye mock me—but the power which brought ye
 Hath made you mine. Slaves, scoff not at my will!
 The mind, the spirit, the Promethean spark,

The lightning of my being, is as bright,
 Pervading, and far darting as your own,
 And shall not yield to yours, though coop'd in clay!
 Answer, or I will teach you what I am.

Spirit. We answer as we answer'd; our reply
 Is even in thine own words.

Man. Why say ye so?

Spirit. If, as thou say'st, thine essence be as ours,
 We have replied in telling thee, the thing
 Mortals call death hath nought to do with us.

Man. I then have call'd ye from your realms in vain;
 Ye cannot, or ye will not, aid me.

Spirit. Say,
 What we possess we offer; it is thine:
 Bethink ere thou dismiss us; ask again;
 Kingdom, and sway, and strength, and length of days——

Man. Accursed! what have I to do with days?
 They are too long already.—Hence—begone!

Spirit. Yet pause: being here, our will would do thee
 Bethink thee, is there then no other gift [service;
 Which we can make not worthless in thine eyes?

Man. No, none: yet stay—one moment, ere we part,
 I would behold ye face to face. I hear
 Your voices, sweet and melancholy sounds,
 As music on the waters; and I see
 The steady aspect of a clear large star;
 But nothing more. Approach me as ye are,
 Or one, or all, in your accustom'd forms.

Spirit. We have no forms, beyond the elements
 Of which we are the mind and principle:
 But choose a form—in that we will appear.

Man. I have no choice; there is no form on earth
 Hideous or beautiful to me. Let him,
 Who is most powerful of ye, take such aspect
 As unto him may seem most fitting—Come!

*Seventh Spirit (appearing in the shape of a beautiful
 female figure).* Behold!

Man. Oh God! if it be thus, and thou
 Art not a madness and a mockery,
 I yet might be most happy. I will clasp thee,
 And we again will be—— [The figure vanishes.

My heart is crush'd!

[MANFRED falls senseless.

(A voice is heard in the Incantation which follows.)

When the moon is on the wave,
And the glow-worm in the grass,
And the meteor on the grave,
And the wisp on the morass ;
When the falling stars are shooting,
And the answer'd owls are hooting,
And the silent leaves are still
In the shadow of the hill,
Shall my soul be upon thine,
With a power and with a sign.

Though thy slumber may be deep,
Yet thy spirit shall not sleep ;
There are shades which will not vanish,
There are thoughts thou canst not banish ;
By a power to thee unknown,
Thou canst never be alone ;
Thou art wrapt as with a shroud,
Thou art gather'd in a cloud :
And for ever shalt thou dwell
In the spirit of this spell.

Though thou seest me not pass by,
Thou shalt feel me with thine eye
As a thing that, though unseen,
Must be near thee, and hath been ;
And when in that secret dread
Thou hast turn'd around thy head,
Thou shalt marvel I am not
As thy shadow on the spot,
And the power which thou dost feel
Shall be what thou must conceal.

And a magic voice and verse
Hath baptized thee with a curse ;
And a spirit of the air
Hath begirt thee with a snare ;
In the wind there is a voice
Shall forbid thee to rejoice ;
And to thee shall night deny
All the quiet of her sky ;
And the day shall have a sun,
Which shall make thee wish it done.

From thy false tears I did distil
An essence which hath strength to kill ;
From thy own heart I then did wring
The black blood in its blackest spring ;
From thy own smile I snatch'd the snake,
For there it coil'd as in a brake ;
From thy own lip I drew the charm
Which gave all these their chiefest harm ;
In proving every poison known,
I found the strongest was thine own.

By thy cold breast and serpent smile,
By thy unfathom'd gulfs of guile,
By that most seeming virtuous eye,
By thy shut soul's hypocrisy ;
By the perfection of thine art
Which pass'd for human thine own heart ;
By thy delight in others' pain,
And by thy brotherhood of Cain,
I call upon thee ! and compel
Thyself to be thy proper Hell !

And on thy head I pour the vial
Which doth devote thee to this trial ;
Nor to slumber, nor to die,
Shall be in thy destiny :
Though thy death shall still seem near
To thy wish, but as a fear ;
Lo ! the spell now works around thee,
And the clankless chain hath bound thee ;
O'er thy heart and brain together
Hath the word been pass'd—now wither !

SCENE II.

*The Mountain of the Jungfrau.—Time, Morning.—MANFRED
alone upon the Cliffs.*

Man. The spirits I have raised abandon me,
The spells which I have studied baffle me,
The remedy I reck'd of tortured me ;
I lean no more on superhuman aid ;
It hath no power upon the past, and for

The future, till the past be gulf'd in darkness,
 It is not of my search.—My mother Earth !
 And thou fresh breaking Day, and you, ye Mountains,
 Why are ye beautiful ? I cannot love ye.
 And thou, the bright eye of the universe,
 That openest over all, and unto all
 Art a delight—thou shin'st not on my heart.
 And you, ye crags, upon whose extreme edge
 I stand, and on the torrent's brink beneath
 Behold the tall pines dwindled as to shrubs
 In dizziness of distance ; when a leap,
 A stir, a motion, even a breath, would bring
 My breast upon its rocky bosom's bed
 To rest for ever—wherefore do I pause ?
 I feel the impulse—yet I do not plunge ;
 I see the peril—yet do not recede ;
 And my brain reels—and yet my foot is firm :
 There is a power upon me which withholds,
 And makes it my fatality to live,—
 If it be life to wear within myself
 This barrenness of spirit, and to be
 My own soul's sepulchre, for I have ceased
 To justify my deeds unto myself—
 The last infirmity of evil. Ay,
 Thou winged and cloud-cleaving minister, [*An eagle passes.*
 Whose happy flight is highest into heaven,
 Well may'st thou swoop so near me—I should be
 Thy prey, and gorge thine eaglets ; thou art gone
 Where the eye cannot follow thee ; but thine
 Yet pierces downward, onward, or above,
 With a pervading vision.—Beautiful !
 How beautiful is all this visible world !
 How glorious in its action and itself !
 But we, who name ourselves its sovereigns, we,
 Half dust, half deity, alike unfit
 To sink or soar, with our mix'd essence make
 A conflict of its elements, and breathe
 The breath of degradation and of pride,
 Contending with low wants and lofty will,
 Till our mortality predominates,
 And men are—what they name not to themselves,
 And trust not to each other. Hark ! the note,
 [*The Shepherd's pipe in the distance is heard.*

'The natural music of the mountain reed—
For here the patriarchal days are not
A pastoral fable—pipes in the liberal air,
Mix'd with the sweet bells of the sauntering herd;
My soul would drink those echoes. Oh, that I were
The viewless spirit of a lovely sound,
A living voice, a breathing harmony,
A bodiless enjoyment—born and dying
With the blest tone which made me !

Enter from below a CHAMOIS HUNTER.

Chamois Hunter. Even so
This way the chamois leapt : her nimble feet
Have baffled me ; my gains to-day will scarce
Repay my break-neck travail.—What is here ?
Who seems not of my trade, and yet hath reach'd
A height which none even of our mountaineers;
Save our best hunters, may attain : his garb
Is goodly, his mien manly, and his air
Proud as a free-born peasant's, at this distance :
I will approach him nearer.

Man. (not perceiving the other). To be thus—
Grey-hair'd with anguish, like these blasted pines,
Wrecks of a single winter, barkless, branchless,
A blighted trunk upon a cursed root,
Which but supplies a feeling to decay—
And to be thus, eternally but thus,
Having been otherwise ! Now furrow'd o'er
With wrinkles, plough'd by moments,—not by years,—
And hours, all tortured into ages—hours
Which I outlive !—Ye toppling crags of ice !
Ye avalanches, whom a breath draws down
In mountainous o'erwhelming, come and crush me !
I hear ye momentarily above, beneath,
Crash with a frequent conflict ; but ye pass,
And only fall on things that still would live ;
On the young flourishing forest, or the hut
And hamlet of the harmless villager.

C. Hun. The mists begin to rise from up the valley ;
I'll warn him to descend, or he may chance
To lose at once his way and life together.

Man. The mists boil up around the glaciers ; clouds

Rise curling fast beneath me, white and sulphury,
Like foam from the roused ocean of deep Hell,
Whose every wave breaks on a living shore,
Heap'd with the damn'd like pebbles.—I am giddy.

C. Hun. I must approach him cautiously; if near,
A sudden step will startle him, and he
Seems tottering already.

Man. Mountains have fallen,
Leaving a gap in the clouds, and with the shock
Rocking their Alpine brethren; filling up
The ripe green valleys with destruction's splinters;
Damming the rivers with a sudden dash,
Which crush'd the waters into mist and made
Their fountains find another channel—thus,
Thus, in its old age, did Mount Rosenberg—
Why stood I not beneath it?

C. Hun. Friend! have a care.
Your next step may be fatal!—for the love
Of him who made you, stand not on that brink!

Man. (*not hearing him*). Such would have been for me a
fitting tomb;
My bones had then been quiet in their depth;
They had not then been strewn upon the rocks
For the wind's pastime—as thus—thus they shall be—
In this one plunge.—Farewell, ye opening heavens!
Look not upon me thus reproachfully—
You were not meant for me—Earth! take these atoms!

[*As MANFRED is in act to spring from the cliff, the CHAMOIS
HUNTER seizes and retains him with a sudden grasp.*]

C. Hun. Hold, madman!—though weary of thy life,
Stain not our pure vales with thy guilty blood:
Away with me—I will not quit my hold.

Man. I am most sick at heart—nay, grasp me not—
I am all feebleness—the mountains whirl
Spinning around me—I grow blind—What art thou?

C. Hun. I'll answer that anon.—Away with me—
The clouds grow thicker—there—now lean on me—
Place your foot here—here, take this staff, and cling
A moment to that shrub—now give me your hand,
And hold fast by my girdle—softly—well—
The Chalet will be gain'd within an hour:
Come on, we'll quickly find a surer footing,

And something like a pathway, which the torrent
 Hath wash'd since winter.—Come, 't is bravely done—
 You should have been a hunter.—Follow me.

[*As they descend the rocks with difficulty, the scene closes.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A cottage amongst the Bernese Alps.*

MANFRED and the CHAMOIS HUNTER.

C. Hun. No, no—yet pause—thou must not yet go forth :
 Thy mind and body are alike unfit
 To trust each other, for some hours, at least ;
 When thou art better, I will be thy guide—
 But whither ?

Man. It imports not : I do know
 My route full well, and need no further guidance.

C. Hun. Thy garb and gait bespeak thee of high lineage—
 One of the many chiefs whose castled crags
 Look o'er the lower valleys—which of these
 May call thee lord ? I only know their portals ;
 My way of life leads me but rarely down
 To bask by the huge hearths of those old halls,
 Carousing with the vassals ; but the paths,
 Which step from out our mountains to their doors,
 I know from childhood—which of these is thine ?

Man. No matter.

C. Hun. Well, sir, pardon me the question,
 And be of better cheer. Come, taste my wine ;
 'T is of an ancient vintage ; many a day
 'T has thaw'd my veins among our glaciers, now
 Let it do thus for thine—Come, pledge me fairly.

Man. Away, away ! there's blood upon the brim !
 Will it then never—never sink in the earth ? [thee.]

• *C. Hun.* What dost thou mean ? thy senses wander from

Man. I say 't is blood—my blood ! the pure warm stream
 Which ran in the veins of my father, and in ours
 When we were in our youth, and had one heart,
 And loved each other as we should not love,
 And this was shed : but still it rises up,
 Colouring the clouds, that shut me out from heaven,
 Where thou art not—and I shall never be.

C. Hun. Man of strange words, and some half-maddening.
Which makes thee people vacancy, whate'er [sin.
Thy dread and sufferance be, there's comfort yet—
The aid of holy men, and heavenly patience—

Man. Patience and patience! Hence—that word was
made

For brutes of burthen, not for birds of prey;
Preach it to mortals of a dust like thine,—
I am not of thine order.

C. Hun. Thanks to heaven!
I would not be of thine for the free fame
Of William Tell; but whatsoe'er thine ill,
It must be borne, and these wild starts are useless.

Man. Do I not bear it?—Look on me—I live.

C. Hun. This is convulsion and no healthful life.

Man. I tell thee, man! I have lived many years,
Many long years, but they are nothing now
To those which I must number: ages—ages—
Space and eternity—and consciousness,
With the fierce thirst of death—and still unslaked!

C. Hun. Why, on thy brow the seal of middle age
Hath scarce been set; I am thine elder far.

Man. Think'st thou existence doth depend on time?
It doth; but actions are our epochs: mine
Have made my days and nights imperishable,
Endless, and all alike, as sands on the shore,
Innumerable atoms; and one desert,
Barren and cold, on which the wild waves break,
But nothing rests, save carcasses and wrecks,
Rocks, and the salt-surf weeds of bitterness.

C. Hun. Alas! he's mad—but yet I must not leave him.

Man. I would I were—for then the things I see
Would be but a distemper'd dream.

C. Hun. What is it
That thou dost see, or think thou look'st upon?

Man. Myself, and thee a peasant of the Alps—
Thy humble virtues, hospitable nome,
And spirit patient, pious, proud, and free;
Thy self-respect, grafted on innocent thoughts;
Thy days of health, and nights of sleep; thy toils,
By danger dignified, yet guiltless; hopes
Of cheerful old age and a quiet grave,
With cross and garland over its green turf,

And thy grandchildren's love for epitaph ;

This do I see—and then I look within—

It matters not—my soul was scorch'd already !

C. Hun. And wouldst thou then exchange thy lot for mine ?

Man. No, friend ! I would not wrong thee, nor exchange
My lot with living being : I can bear—
However wretchedly, 't is still to bear—
In life what others could not brook to dream,
But perish in their slumber.

C. Hun. And with this—
This cautious feeling for another's pain,
Canst thou be black with evil ?—say not so.
Can one of gentle thoughts have wreak'd revenge
Upon his enemies ?

Man. Oh ! no, no, no !
My injuries came down on those who loved me—
On those whom I best loved : I never quell'd
An enemy, save in my just defence—
But my embrace was fatal.

C. Hun. Heaven give thee rest !
And penitence restore thee to thyself ;
My prayers shall be for thee.

Man. I need them not—
But can endure thy pity. I depart—
'T is time—farewell !—Here 's gold, and thanks for thee—
No words—it is thy due.—Follow me not—
I know my path—the mountain peril 's past :
And once again I charge thee, follow not !

[*Exit MANFRED.*]

SCENE II.

A lower Valley in the Alps.—A Cataract.

Enter MANFRED.

It is not noon—the sunbow's rays still arch
The torrent with the many hues of heaven,
And roll the sheeted silver's waving column
O'er the crag's headlong perpendicular,
And fling its lines of foaming light along,
And to and fro, like the pale courser's tail,
The Giant stæd, to be bestrode by Death,
As told in the Apocalypse. No eyes

But mine now drink this sight of loveliness ;
 I should be sole in this sweet solitude,
 And with the Spirit of the place divide
 The homage of these waters.—I will call her.

[MANFRED takes some of the water into the palm of his hand,
 and flings it into the air muttering the adjuration After
 a pause, the WITCH OF THE ALPS rises beneath the arch of
 the sunbow of the torrent.

Beautiful Spirit ! with thy hair of light,
 And dazzling eyes of glory, in whose form
 The charms of earth's least mortal daughters grow
 To an unearthly stature, in an essence
 Of purer elements ; while the hues of youth,—
 Carnation'd like a sleeping infant's cheek,
 Rock'd by the beating of her mother's heart,
 Or the rose tints, which summer's twilight leaves
 Upon the lofty glacier's virgin snow,
 The blush of earth embracing with her heaven,—
 Tinge thy celestial aspect, and make tame
 The beauties of the sunbow which bends o'er thee.
 Beautiful Spirit ! in thy calm clear brow,
 Wherein is glass'd serenity of soul,
 Which of itself shows immortality,
 I read that thou wilt pardon to a Son
 Of Earth, whom the abstruser powers permit
 At times to commune with them—if that he
 Avail him of his spells—to call thee thus,
 And gaze on thee a moment.

Witch.

Son of Earth !

I know thee, and the powers which give thee power ;
 I know thee for a man of many thoughts,
 And deeds of good and ill, extreme in both,
 Fatal and fated in thy sufferings.

I have expected this—what wouldst thou with me ?

Man. To look upon thy beauty—nothing further.
 The face of the earth hath madden'd me, and I
 Take refuge in her mysteries, and pierce
 To the abodes of those who govern her—
 But they can nothing aid me. I have sought
 From them what they could not bestow, and now
 I search no further.

Witch.

What could be the quest

Which is not in the power of the most powerful,
The rulers of the invisible?

Man.

A boon ;

But why should I repeat it ? 't were in vain.

Witch. I know not that ; let thy lips utter it.

Man. Well, though it torture me, 't is but the same ;
My pang shall find a voice. From my youth upwards
My spirit walk'd not with the souls of men,
Nor look'd upon the earth with human eyes ;
The thirst of their ambition was not mine ;
The aim of their existence was not mine ;
My joys, my griefs, my passions, and my powers,
Made me a stranger ; though I wore the form,
I had no sympathy with breathing flesh,
Nor midst the creatures of clay that girded me
Was there but one who—but of her anon.
I said with men, and with the thoughts of men,
I held but slight communion ; but instead,
My joy was in the wilderness,—to breathe
The difficult air of the iced mountain's top,
Where the birds dare not build, nor the insect's wing
Flit o'er the herbless granite ; or to plunge
Into the torrent, and to roll along
On the swift whirl of the new breaking wave
Of river-stream, or ocean, in their flow.
In these my early strength exulted ; or
To follow through the night the moving moon,
The stars and their development ; or catch
The dazzling lightnings till my eyes grew dim ;
Or to look, list'ning, on the scatter'd leaves,
While Autumn winds were at their evening song.
These were my pastimes, and to be alone ;
For if the beings, of whom I was one,—
Hating to be so,—cross'd me in my path,
I felt myself degraded back to them,
And was all clay again. And then I dived,
In my lone wanderings, to the caves of death,
Searching its cause in its effect ; and drew
From wither'd bones, and skulls, and heap'd up dust,
Conclusions most forbidden. Then I pass'd
The nights of years in sciences untaught,
Save in the old time ; and with time and toil,
And terrible ordeal, and such penance

As in itself hath power upon the air,
 And spirits that do compass air and earth,
 Space, and the peopled infinite, I made
 Mine eyes familiar with Eternity,
 Such as, before me, did the Magi, and
 He who from out their fountain dwellings raised
 Eros and Anteros, at Gadara,
 As I do thee ;—and with my knowledge grew
 The thirst of knowledge, and the power and joy
 Of this most bright intelligence, until—

Witch. Proceed.

Man. Oh ! I but thus prolong'd my words,
 Boasting these idle attributes, because
 As I approach the core of my heart's grief—
 But to my task. I have not named to thee
 Father or mother, mistress, friend, or being,
 With whom I wore the chain of human ties ;
 If I had such, they seem'd not such to me ;
 Yet there was one—

Witch. Spare not thyself—proceed.

Man. She was like me in lineaments ; her eyes,
 Her hair, her features, all, to the very tone
 Even of her voice, they said were like to mine ;
 But soften'd all, and temper'd into beauty :
 She had the same lone thoughts and wanderings,
 The quest of hidden knowledge, and a mind
 To comprehend the universe : nor these
 Alone, but with them gentler powers than mine,
 Pity, and smiles, and tears—which I had not ;
 And tenderness—but that I had for her ;
 Humility—and that I never had.
 Her faults were mine—her virtues were her own—
 I loved her, and destroy'd her !

Witch. With thy hand ?

Man. Not with my hand, but heart, which broke her
 It gazed on mine, and wither'd. I have shed [heart ;
 Blood, but not hers—and yet her blood was shed ;
 I saw—and could not stanch it.

Witch. And for this—

A being of the race thou dost despise,
 The order, which thine own would rise above,
 Mingling with us and ours,—thou dost forego

Witch. Enough ! I may retire—then—say !

Man. Retire ! [*The WITCH disappears.*]

Man. (alone). We are the fools of time and terror :
 Steal on us, and steal from us ; yet we live,
 Loathing our life, and dreading still to die. [Days
 In all the days of this detested yoke—
 This vital weight upon the struggling heart,
 Which sinks with sorrow, or beats quick with pain,
 Or joy that ends in agony or faintness—
 In all the days of past and future, for
 In life there is no present, we can number
 How few—how less than few—wherein the soul
 Forbears to pant for death, and yet draws back
 As from a stream in winter, though the chill
 Be but a moment's. I have one resource
 Still in my science—I can call the dead,
 And ask them what it is we dread to be :
 The sternest answer can but be the Grave,
 And that is nothing. If they answer not—
 The buried Prophet answer'd to the Hag
 Of Endor ; and the Spartan Monarch drew
 From the Byzantine maid's unsleeping spirit
 An answer and his destiny—he slew
 That which he loved, unknowing what he slew,
 And died unpardon'd—though he call'd in aid
 The Phyxian Jove, and in Phigalia roused
 The Arcadian Evocators to compel
 The indignant shadow to depose her wrath,
 Or fix her term of vengeance—she replied
 In words of dubious import, but fulfill'd.
 If I had never lived, that which I love
 Had still been living ; had I never loved,
 That which I love would still be beautiful,
 Happy and giving happiness. What is she ?
 What is she now ?—a sufferer for my sins—
 A thing I dare not think upon—or nothing.
 Within few hours I shall not call in vain—
 Yet in this hour I dread the thing I dare :
 Until this hour I never shrink to gaze
 On spirit, good or evil—now I tremble,
 And feel a strange cold thaw upon my heart.
 But I can act even what I most abhor,
 And champion human fears.—The night approaches. [*Exit.*]

SCENE III.

*The Summit of the Jungfrau Mountain.**Enter FIRST DESTINY.*

The moon is rising broad, and round, and bright;
And here on snöws, where never human foot
Of common mortal trod, we nightly tread,
And leave no traces : o'er thy savage sea,
The glassy ocean of the mountain ice,
We skim its rugged breakers, which put on
The aspect of a tumbling tempest's foam,
Frozen in a moment—a dead whirlpool's image:
And this most steep fantastic pinnacle,
The fretwork of some earthquake—where the clouds
Pause to repose themselves in passing by—
Is sacred to our revels, or our vigils;
Here do I wait my sisters, on our way
To the Hall of Arimanes, for to-night
Is our great festival—'t is strange they come not.

A Voice without singing.

The Captive Usurper,
Hurl'd down from the throne
Lay buried in torpor,
Forgotten and lone;
I broke through his slumbers,
I shiver'd his chain,
I leagu'd him with numbers—
He's Tyrant again!

With the blood of a million he'll answer my care,
With a nation's destruction—his flight and despair.

Second Voice, without.

The ship sail'd on, the ship sail'd fast,
But I left not a sail, and I left not a mast;
There is not a plank of the hull or the deck,
And there is not a wretch to lament o'er his wreck;
Save one, whom I held, as he swam, by the hair,
And he was a subject well worthy my care;

A traitor on land, and a pirate at sea—
But I saved him to wreak further havoc for me!

FIRST DESTINY, *answering.*

The city lies sleeping ;
The morn, to deplore it,
May dawn on it weeping :
Sullenly, slowly,
The black plague flew o'er it—
Thousands lie lowly ;
Tens of thousands shall perish ;
The living shall fly from
The sick they should cherish ;
But nothing can vanquish
The touch that they die from.
Sorrow and anguish,
And evil and dread,
Envelope a nation ;
The blest are the dead,
Who see not the sight
Of their own desolation ;
This work of a night—
This wreck of a realm—this deed of my doing—
For ages I've done, and shall still be renewing !

Enter the SECOND and THIRD DESTINIES.

The Three.

Our hands contain the hearts of men,
Our footsteps are their graves ;
We only give to take again
The spirits of our slaves !

First Des. Welcome !—Where 's Nemesis ?

Second Des. At some great work ;

But what I know not, for my hands were full.

Third Des. Behold she cometh.

Enter NEMESIS.

First Des. Say, where hast thou been ?
My sisters and thyself are slow to-night.
Nem. I was detain'd repairing shatter'd thrones,
Marrying fools, restoring dynasties,

Avenging men upon their enemies,
 And making them repent their own revenge;
 Goading the wise to madness; from the dull
 Shaping out oracles to rule the world
 Afresh, for they were waxing out of date,
 And mortals dared to ponder for themselves,
 To weigh kings in the balance, and to speak
 Of freedom, the forbidden fruit.—Away!
 We have outstay'd the hour—mount we our clouds?

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.

The Hall of Arimanes—Arimanes on his Throne, a Globe of Fire, surrounded by the Spirits.

Hymn of the SPIRITS.

Hail to our Master!—Prince of Earth and Air!
 Who walks the clouds and waters—in his hand
 The sceptre of the elements, which tear
 Themselves to chaos at his high command!
 He breatheth—and a tempest shakes the sea;
 He speaketh—and the clouds reply in thunder;
 He gazeth—from his glance the sunbeams flee;
 He moveth—earthquakes rend the world asunder.
 Beneath his footsteps the volcanoes rise;
 His shadow is the Pestilence; his path
 The comets herald through the crackling skies;
 And planets turn to ashes at his wrath.
 To him War offers daily sacrifice;
 To him Death pays his tribute; Life is his,
 With all its infinite of agonies—
 And his the spirit of whatever is!

Enter the DESTINIES and NEMESIS.

First Des. Glory to Arimanes! on the earth
 His power increaseth—both my sisters did
 His bidding, nor did I neglect my duty!

Second Des. Glory to Arimanes! we who bow
 The necks of men, bow down before his throne!

Third Des. Glory to Arimanes! we await
 His nod!

Nem. Sovereign of Sovereigns! we are thine,

Bear what thou borest,
The heart and the form,
And the aspect thou worst
Redeem from the worm.

Appear!—Appear!—Appear!
Who sent thee there requires thee here!

[*The Phantom of ASTARTE rises and stands in the midst.*]

Man. Can this be death? there's bloom upon her cheek;
But now I see it is no living hue,
But a strange hectic—like the unnatural red
Which Autumn plants upon the perish'd leaf.
It is the same! Oh, God! that I should dread
To look upon the same—Astarte!—No,
I cannot speak to her—but bid her speak—
Forgive me or condemn me.

NEMESIS.

By the power which hath broken
The grave which enthrall'd thee,
Speak to him who hath spoken,
Or those who have call'd thee!

Man. She is silent,
And in that silence I am more than answer'd.

Nem. My power extends no further. Prince of Air!
It rests with thee alone—command her voice.

Ari. Spirit—obey this sceptre!

Nem. Silent still!
She is not of our order, but belongs
To the other powers. Mortal! thy quest is vain,
And we are baffled also.

Man. Hear me, hear me—
Astarte! my beloved! speak to me:
I have so much endured—so much endure—
Look on me! the grave hath not changed thee more
Than I am changed for thee. Thou lovedst me
Too much, as I loved thee: we were not made
To torture thus each other, though it were
The deadliest sin to love as we have loved.
Say that thou loath'st me not—that I do bear
This punishment for both—that thou wilt be
One of the blessed—and that I shall die;
For hitherto all hateful things conspire

'To bind me in existence—in a life
 Which makes me shrink from immortality—
 A future like the past. I cannot rest.
 I know not what I ask, nor what I seek :
 I feel but what thou art, and what I am ;
 And I would hear yet once before I perish
 The voice which was my music—Speak to me !
 For I have call'd on thee in the still night,
 Startled the slumbering birds from the hush'd boughs,
 And woke the mountain wolves, and made the caves
 Acquainted with thy vainly echoed name,
 Which answer'd me—many things answer'd me—
 Spirits and men—but thou wert silent all.
 Yet speak to me ! I have outwatch'd the stars,
 And gazed o'er heaven in vain in search of thee.
 Speak to me ! I have wander'd o'er the earth,
 And never found thy likeness—Speak to me !
 Look on the fiends around—they feel for me :
 I fear them not, and feel for thee alone—
 Speak to me ! though it be in wrath ;—but say—
 I reckon not what—but let me hear thee once—
 'This once—once more !

Phantom of Astarte. Manfred !

Man. Say on, say on—

I live but in the sound—it is thy voice !

Phan. Manfred ! To-morrow ends thine earthly ills.
 Farewell !

Man. Yet one word more—am I forgiven ?

Phan. Farewell !

Man. Say, shall we meet again ?

Phan. Farewell !

Man. One word for mercy ! Say, thou lovest me.

Phan. Manfred ! [*The Spirit of ASTARTE disappears.*]

Nem. She's gone, and will not be recall'd ;
 Her words will be fulfill'd. Return to the earth.

A Spirit. He is convulsed.—This is to be a mortal
 And seek the things beyond mortality.

Another Spirit. Yet, see, he mastereth himself, and makes
 His torture tributary to his will.

Had he been one of us, he would have made
 An awful spirit.

Nem. Hast thou further question
 Of our great sovereign, or his worshippers ?

Man. None.

Nem. Then for a time farewell.

Man. We meet then! Where? On the earth?—
Even as thou wilt: and for the grace accorded
I now depart a debtor. Fare ye well!

[*Exit* MANFRED.]

(*Scene closes.*)

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*A Hall in the Castle of Manfred.*

MANFRED and HERMAN.

Man. What is the hour?

Her. It wants but one till sunset,
And promises a lovely twilight.

Man. Say,
Are all things so disposed of in the tower
As I directed?

Her. All, my lord, are ready:
Here is the key and casket.

Man. It is well:
Thou may'st retire. [*Exit* HERMAN.]

Man. (alone). There is a calm upon me—
Inexplicable stillness! which till now
Did not belong to what I knew of life.
If that I did not know philosophy
To be of all our vanities the motliest,
The merest word that ever fool'd the ear
From out the schoolman's jargon, I should deem
The golden secret, the sought "Kalon," found,
And seated in my soul. It will not last,
But it is well to have known it, though but once:
It hath enlarged my thoughts with a new sense,
And I within my tablets would note down
That there is such a feeling. Who is there?

Re-enter HERMAN.

Her. My lord, the abbot of St. Maurice craves
To greet your presence.

Enter the ABBOT OF ST. MAURICE.

Abbot. Peace be with Count Manfred !

Man. Thanks, holy father ! welcome to these walls ;
Thy presence honours them, and blesseth those
Who dwell within them.

Abbot. Would it were so, Count !
But I would fain confer with thee alone.

Man. Herman, retire.—What would my reverend guest ?

Abbot. Thus, without prelude :—Age and zeal, my office
And good intent, must plead my privilege ;
Our near, though not acquainted, neighbourhood,
May also be my herald. Rumours strange,
And of unholy nature, are abroad,
And busy with thy name ; a noble name
For centuries : may he who bears it now
Transmit it unimpair'd !

Man. Proceed,—I listen.

Abbot. 'T is said thou holdest converse with the things
Which are forbidden to the search of man ;
That with the dwellers of the dark abodes,
The many evil and unheavenly spirits
Which walk the valley of the shade of death,
Thou communest. I know that with mankind,
Thy fellows in creation, thou dost rarely
Exchange thy thoughts, and that thy solitude
Is as an anchorite's, were it but holy.

Man. And what are they who do avouch these things ?

Abbot. My pious brethren—the scared peasantry—
Even thy own vassals—who do look on thee
With most unquiet eyes. Thy life 's in peril.

Man. Take it.

Abbot. I come to save, and not destroy :
I would not pry into thy secret soul ;
But if these things be sooth, there still is time
For penitence and pity : reconcile thee
With the true church, and through the church to heaven.

Man. I hear thee. This is my reply : whate'er
I may have been, or am, doth rest between
Heaven and myself. I shall not choose a mortal
To be my mediator. Have I sinn'd
Against your ordinances ? prove and punish !

Abbot. My son ! I did not speak of punishment,

But penitence and pardon ;—with thyself
 The choice of such remains—and for the last,
 Our institutions and our strong belief
 Have given me power to smoothe the path from sin
 'To higher hope and better thoughts ; the first
 I leave to heaven,—“ Vengeance is mine alone ! ”
 So saith the Lord, and with all humbleness
 His servant echoes back the awful word.

Man. Old man ! there is no power in holy men,
 Nor charm in prayer, nor purifying form
 Of penitence, nor outward look, nor fast,
 Nor agony—nor, greater than all these, .
 The innate tortures of that deep despair,
 Which is remorse without the fear of hell,
 But all in all sufficient to itself
 Would make a hell of heaven—can exorcise
 From out the unbounded spirit the quick sense
 Of its own sins, wrongs, sufferance, and revenge
 Upon itself ; there is no future pang
 Can deal that justice on the self-condemn'd
 He deals on his own soul.

Abbot. All this is well ;
 For this will pass away, and be succeeded
 By an auspicious hope, which shall look up
 With calm assurance to that blessed place,
 Which all who seek may win, whatever be
 Their earthly errors, so they be atoned :
 And the commencement of atonement is
 The sense of its necessity Say on—
 And all our church can teach thee shall be taught ;
 And all we can absolve thee shall be pardon'd.

Man. When Rome's sixth emperor was near his last,
 The victim of a self inflicted wound,
 To shun the torments of a public death
 From senates once his slaves, a certain soldier,
 With show of loyal pity, would have stanch'd
 The gushing throat with his officious robe ;
 The dying Roman thrust him back, and said—
 Some empire still in his expiring glance—
 “ It is too late—is this fidelity ? ”

Abbot. And what of this ?

Man. I answer with the Roman—
 “ It is too late ! ”

Abbot. It never can be so;
To reconcile thyself with thy own soul,
And thy own soul with heaven. Hast thou no hope?
'T is strange—even those who do despair above,
Yet shape themselves some fantasy on earth,
To which frail twig they cling, like drowning men.

Man. Ay—father! I have had those earthly visions,
And noble aspirations in my youth,
To make my own the mind of other men,
The enlightener of nations; and to rise
I knew not whither—it might be to fall;
But fall, even as the mountain-cataract,
Which having leapt from its more dazzling height,
Even in the foaming strength of its abyss,
(Which cast up misty columns that become
Clouds raining from the re-ascended skies,)
Lies low but mighty still.—But this is past,
My thoughts mistook themselves.

Abbot. And wherefore so?

Man. I could not tame my nature down; for he
Must serve who fain would sway; and soothe, and sue,
And watch all time, and pry into all place,
And be a living lie, who would become
A mighty thing amongst the mean, and such
The mass are; I disdain to mingle with
A herd, though to be leader—and of wolves.
The lion is alone, and so am I.

Abbot. And why not live and act with other men?

Man. Because my nature was averse from life;
And yet not cruel; for I would not make
But find a desolation. Like the wind,
The red-hot breath of the most lone simoom,
Which dwells but in the desert, and sweeps o'er
The barren sands which bear no shrubs to blast,
And revels o'er their wild and arid waves,
And seeketh not, so that it is not sought,
But being met is deadly,—such hath been
The course of my existence; but there came
Things in my path which are no more.

Abbot. Alas!

I 'gin to fear that thou art past all aid
From me and from my calling; yet so young,
I still would—

Man. Look on me ! there is an order
 Of mortals on the earth, who do become
 Old in their youth, and die ere middle age,
 Without the violence of warlike death ;
 Some perishing of pleasure, some of study,
 Some worn with toil, some of mere weariness,
 Some of disease, and some insanity,
 And some of wither'd or of broken hearts ;
 For this last is a malady which slays
 More than are number'd in the lists of Fate,
 Taking all shapes, and bearing many names.
 Look upon me ! for even of all these things
 Have I partaken ; and of all these things,
 One were enough ; then wonder not that I
 Am what I am, but that I ever was,
 Or having been, that I am still on earth.

Abbot. Yet, hear me still——

Man. Old man ! I do respect
 Thine order, and revere thy years ; I deem
 Thy purpose pious, but it is in vain :
 Think me not churlish ; I would spare myself,
 Far more than me, in shunning at this time
 All further colloquy—and so—farewell. [*Exit MANFRED.*]

Abbot. This should have been a noble creature : he
 Hath all the energy which would have made
 A goodly frame of glorious elements,
 Had they been wisely mingled ; as it is,
 It is an awful chaos—light and darkness,
 And mind and dust, and passions and pure thoughts
 Mix'd, and contending without end or order,—
 All dormant or destructive : he will perish,
 And yet he must not ; I will try once more.
 For such are worth redemption ; and my duty
 Is to dare all things for a righteous end.
 I'll follow him—but cautiously, though surely.
 [*Exit ABBOT.*]

SCENE II.

Another Chamber.

MANFRED and HERMAN.

Her. My lord, you bade me wait on you at sunset :
 He sinks behind the mountain.

Man.

Doth he so?

I will look on him.

[*MANFRED advances to the window of the Hall.*

Glorious Orb! the idol

Of early nature, and the vigorous race
Of undiseased mankind, the giant sons
Of the embrace of angels, with a sex
More beautiful than they, which did draw down
The erring spirits who can ne'er return.—
Most glorious orb! that wert a worship, ere
The mystery of thy making was reveal'd!
Thou earliest minister of the Almighty,
Which gladden'd, on their mountain tops, the hearts
Of the Chaldean shepherds, till they pour'd
Themselves in orisons! Thou material God!
And representative of the Unknown—
Who chose thee for his shadow! Thou chief star!
Centre of many stars! which mak'st our earth
Endurable, and temperest the hues
And hearts of all who walk within thy rays!
Sire of the seasons! Monarch of the climes,
And those who dwell in them! for near or far,
Our inborn spirits have a tint of thee
Even as our outward aspects;—thou dost rise,
And shine, and set in glory. Fare thee well!
I ne'er shall see thee more. As my first glance
Of love and wonder was for thee, then take
My latest look; thou wilt not beam on one
To whom the gifts of life and warmth have been
Of a more fatal nature. He is gone:
I follow.

[*Exit MANFRED.*

SCENE III.

*The Mountains—The Castle of Manfred at some distance—A
Terrace before a Tower—Time, Twilight.*

HERMAN, MANUEL, and other Dependants of MANFRED.

Her. 'Tis strange enough; night after night, for years,
He hath pursued long vigils in this tower,
Without a witness. I have been within it,—
So have we all been oft-times; but from it,
Or its contents, it were impossible

To draw conclusions absolute, of aught
His studies tend to. To be sure, there is
One chamber where none enter: I would give
The fee of what I have to come these three years,
To pore upon its mysteries.

Manuel. 'T were dangerous ;
Content thyself with what thou know'st already.

Her. Ah ! Manuel ! thou art elderly and wise,
And couldst say much ; thou hast dwelt within the castle—
How many years is 't ?

Manuel. Ere Count Manfred's birth,
I served his father, whom he nought resembles.

Her. There be more sons in like predicament.
But wherein do they differ ?

Manuel. I speak not
Of features or of form, but mind and habits :
Count Sigismund was proud, but gay and free,—
A warrior and a reveller ; he dwelt not
With books and solitude, nor made the night
A gloomy vigil, but a festal time,
Merrier than day ; he did not walk the rocks
And forests like a wolf, nor turn aside
From men and their delights.

Her. Beshrew the hour,
But those were jocund times ! I would that such
Would visit the old walls again ; they look
As if they had forgotten them.

Manuel. These walls
Must change their chieftain first. Oh ! I have seen
Some strange things in them, Herman.

Her. Come, be friendly ;
Relate me some to while away our watch :
I've heard thee darkly speak of an event
Which happen'd hereabouts, by this same tower.

Manuel. That was a night indeed ! I do remember
'T was twilight, as it may be now, and such
Another evening ;—yon red cloud, which rests
On Eigher's pinnacle, so rested then,—
So like that it might be the same ; the wind
Was faint and gusty, and the mountain snows
Began to glitter with the climbing moon ;
Count Manfred was, as now, within his tower,—
How occupied, we knew not, but with him

The sole companion of his wanderings
 And watchings—her, whom of all earthly things
 That lived, the only thing he seem'd to love,—
 As he, indeed, by blood was bound to do,
 The lady Astarte, his—

Hush ! who comes here ?

Enter the ABBOT.

Abbot. Where is your master ?

Her. Yonder in the tower.

Abbot. I must speak with him.

Manuel. 'T is impossible ;
 He is most private, and must not be thus
 Intruded on.

Abbot. Upon myself I take
 The forfeit of my fault, if fault there be—
 But I must see him.

Her. Thou hast seen him once
 This eve already.

Abbot. Herman ! I command thee,
 Knock, and apprise the Count of my approach.

Her. We dare not.

Abbot. Then it seems I must be herald
 Of my own purpose.

Manuel. Reverend father, stop—
 I pray you pause.

Abbot. Why so ?

Manuel. But step this way,
 And I will tell you further.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

Interior of the Tower.

MANFRED *alone.*

•The stars are forth, the moon above the tops
 Of the snow-shining mountains.—Beautiful !
 I linger yet with Nature, for the Night
 Hath been to me a more familiar face
 Than that of man ; and in her starry shade
 Of dim and solitary loveliness,
 I learn'd the language of another world.
 I do remember me, that in my youth,

When I was wandering,—upon such a night
 I stood within the Coliseum's wall,
 'Midst the chief relics of almighty Rome;
 The trees which grew along the broken arches
 Waved dark in the blue midnight, and the stars
 Shone through the rents of ruin; from afar
 The watch-dog bay'd beyond the Tiber; and
 More near from out the Cæsars' palace came
 The owl's long cry, and, interruptedly,
 Of distant sentinels the fitful song
 Begun and died upon the gentle wind.
 Some cypresses beyond the time-worn breach
 Appear'd to skirt the horizon, yet they stood
 Within a bowshot. Where the Cæsars dwelt,
 And dwell the tuneless birds of night, amidst
 A grove which springs through levell'd battlements,
 And twines its roots with the imperial hearths,
 Ivy usurps the laurel's place of growth:
 But the gladiators' bloody Circus stands,
 A noble wreck in ruinous perfection,
 While Cæsar's chambers, and the Augustan halls,
 Grovel on earth in indistinct decay.
 And thou didst shine, thou rolling moon, upon
 All this, and cast a wide and tender light,
 Which soften'd down the hoar austerity
 Of rugged desolation, and fill'd up,
 As 't were anew, the gaps of centuries;
 Leaving that beautiful which still was so,
 And making that which was not, till the place
 Became religion, and the heart ran o'er
 With silent worship of the great of old,—
 The dead but sceptred sovereigns, who still rule
 Our spirits from their urns.

'T was such a night !
 'T is strange that I recall it at this time ;
 But I have found our thoughts take wildest flight
 Even at the moment when they should array
 Themselves in pensive order.

Enter the ABBOT.

Abbot. My good lord !
 I crave a second grace for this approach,
 But yet let not my humble zeal offend

By its abruptness—all it hath of ill
 Recoils on me; its good in the effect
 May light upon your head—could I say *heart*—
 Could I touch *that*, with words or prayers, I should
 Recall a noble spirit which hath wander'd;
 But is not yet all lost.

Man. Thou know'st me not;
 My days are number'd, and my deeds recorded:
 Retire, or 't will be dangerous—Away!

Abbot. Thou dost not mean to menace me?

Man. Not I;

I simply tell thee peril is at hand,
 And would preserve thee.

Abbot. What dost thou mean?

Man. Look there!

What dost thou see?

Abbot. Nothing.

Man. Look there, I say,
 And steadfastly;—now tell me what thou seest?

Abbot. That which should shake me, but I fear it not:
 I see a dusk and awful figure rise,
 Like an infernal god, from out the earth;
 His face wrapt in a mantle, and his form
 Robed as with angry clouds: he stands between
 Thyself and me—but I do fear him not.

Man. Thou hast no cause—he shall not harm thee—but
 His sight may shock thine old limbs into palsy.
 I say to thee—Retire!

Abbot. And I reply—
 Never—till I have battled with this fiend:—
 What doth he here?

Man. Why—ay—what doth he here?
 I did not send for him,—he is unbidden.

Abbot. Alas! lost mortal! what with guests like these
 Hast thou to do? I tremble for thy sake:
 Why doth he gaze on thee, and thou on him?
 Ah! he unveils his aspect: on his brow
 The thunder-scars are graven: from his eye
 Glares forth the immortality of hell—
 Avaunt!—

Man. Pronounce—what is thy mission?

Spirit. Come!

Abbot. What art thou, unknown being? answer!—speak!

Spirit. The genius of this mortal.—Come ! 't is time.

Man. I am prepared for all things, but deny
The power which summons me. Who sent thee here ?

Spirit. Thou 'lt know anon—Come ! come !

Man. I have commanded

Things of an essence greater far than thine,
And striven with thy masters. Get thee hence !

Spirit. Mortal ! thine hour is come—Away ! I say.

Man. I knew, and know my hour is come, but not
To render up my soul to such as thee :
Away ! I'll die as I have lived—alone.

Spirit. Then I must summon up my brethren.—Rise !
[*Other Spirits rise up.*]

Abbot. Avaunt ! ye evil ones !—Avaunt ! I say ;
Ye have no power where piety hath power,
And I do charge ye in the name——

Spirit. Old man !
We know ourselves, our mission, and thine order ;
Waste not thy holy words on idle uses,
It were in vain : this man is forfeited.
Once more I summon him—Away ! Away !

Man. I do defy ye,—though I feel my soul
Is ebbing from me, yet I do defy ye ;
Nor will I hence, while I have earthly breath
To breathe my scorn upon ye—earthly strength
To wrestle, though with spirits ; what ye take
Shall be ta'en limb by limb.

Spirit. Reluctant mortal !
Is this the Magian who would so pervade
The world invisible, and make himself
Almost our equal ? Can it be that thou
Art thus in love with life ? the very life
Which made thee wretched !

Man. Thou false fiend, thou liest !
My life is in its last hour,—that I know,
Nor would redeem a moment of that hour ;
I do not combat against death, but thee
And thy surrounding angels ; my past power
Was purchased by no compact with thy crew,
But by superior science—penance, daring,
And length of watching, strength of mind, and skill
In knowledge of our fathers—when the earth
Saw men and spirits walking side by side,

And gave ye no supremacy : I stand
Upon my strength—I do defy—deny—
Spurn back, and scorn ye !—

Spirit. But thy many crimes
Have made thee———

Man. What are they to such as thee?
Must crimes be punish'd but by other crimes,
And greater criminals?—Back to thy hell !
Thou hast no power upon me, *that* I feel ;
Thou never shalt possess me, *that* I know :
What I have done is done ; I bear within
A torture which could nothing gain from thine :
The mind which is immortal makes itself
Requital for its good or evil thoughts,—
Is its own origin of ill and end
And its own place and time : its innate sense,
When stripp'd of this mortality, derives
No colour from the fleeting things without,
But is absorb'd in sufferance or in joy,
Born from the knowledge of its own desert.
Thou didst not tempt me, and thou couldst not tempt me ;
I have not been thy dupe, nor am thy prey—
But was my own destroyer, and will be
My own hereafter.—Back, ye baffled fiends !—
The hand of death is on me—but not yours !

[*The Demons disappear.*]

Abbot. Alas ! how pale thou art—thy lips are white—
And thy breast heaves—and in thy gasping throat
The accents rattle : Give thy prayers to heaven—
Pray—albeit but in thought,—but die not thus.

Man. 'Tis over—my dull eyes can fix thee not ;
But all things swim around me, and the earth
Heaves as it were beneath me. Fare thee well !
Give me thy hand.

Abbot. Cold—cold—even to the heart—
But yet one prayer—Alas ! how fares it with thee ?

Man. Old man ! 't is not so difficult to die.

[*MANFRED expires.*]

Abbot. He's gone—his soul hath ta'en its earthless flight ;
Whither ? I dread to think—but he is gone.

MARINO FALIERO, DOGE OF VENICE :
 AN HISTORICAL TRAGEDY,
 IN FIVE ACTS.

"Dux inquieti turbidus Adriæ."—HORACE.

PREFACE.

THE conspiracy of the Doge Marino Faliero is one of the most remarkable events in the annals of the most singular government, city, and people of modern history. It occurred in the year 1355. Everything about Venice is, or was, extraordinary—her aspect is like a dream, and her history is like a romance. The story of this Doge is to be found in all her Chronicles, and particularly detailed in the "Lives of the Doges," by Marin Sanuto, which is given in the Appendix. It is simply and clearly related, and is perhaps more dramatic in itself than any scenes which can be founded upon the subject.

Marino Faliero appears to have been a man of talents and of courage. I find him commander-in-chief of the land forces at the siege of Zara, where he beat the King of Hungary and his army of eighty thousand men, killing eight thousand men, and keeping the besieged at the same time in check ; an exploit to which I know none similar in history, except that of Cæsar at Alesia, and of Prince Eugene at Belgrade. He was afterwards commander of the fleet in the same war. He took Capo d'Istria. He was ambassador at Genoa and Rome,—at which last he received the news of his election to the dukedom ; his absence being a proof that he sought it by no intrigue, since he was apprised of his predecessor's death and his own

succession at the same moment. But he appears to have been of an ungovernable temper. A story is told by Sanuto, of his having, many years before, when podesta and captain at Treviso, boxed the ears of the bishop, who was somewhat tardy in bringing the Host. For this, honest Sanuto "saddles him with a judgment," as Thwackum did Square; but he does not tell us whether he was punished or rebuked by the Senate for this outrage at the time of its commission. He seems, indeed, to have been afterwards at peace with the church, for we find him ambassador at Rome, and invested with the fief of Val di Marino, in the march of Treviso, and with the title of count, by Lorenzo, Count-bishop of Ceneda. For these facts my authorities are Sanuto, Vettor Sandi, Andrea Navagero, and the account of the siege of Zara, first published by the indefatigable Abate Morelli, in his "*Monumenti Veneziani di varia Letteratura*," printed in 1796, all of which I have looked over in the original language. The moderns, Darù, Sismondi, and Laugier, nearly agree with the ancient chroniclers. Sismondi attributes the conspiracy to his *jealousy*, but I find this nowhere asserted by the national historians. Vettor Sandi, indeed, says, that "*Altri scrissero che . . . dalla gelosa suspizion di esso Doge siasi fatto (Michel Steno) staccar con violenza*," &c. &c.; but this appears to have been by no means the general opinion, nor is it alluded to by Sanuto, or by Navagero: and Sandi himself adds, a moment after, that "*per altre Veneziane memorie traspiri, che non il solo desiderio di vendetta lo dispose alla congiura ma anche la innata abituale ambizion sua, per cui anelava a farsi principe indipendente.*" The first motive appears to have been excited by the gross affront of the words written by Michel Steno on the ducal chair, and by the light and inadequate sentence of the Forty on the offender, who was one of their "*tre Capi*." The attentions of Steno himself appear to have been directed towards one of her damsels, and not to the "*Dogaressa*" herself, against whose *fame* not the slightest insinuation appears, while she is praised for her beauty, and remarked for her youth. Neither do I find it asserted (unless the hint of Sandi be an assertion), that the Doge was actuated by jealousy of his wife; but rather by respect for her, and for his own honour, warranted by his past services and present dignity.

I know not that the historical facts are alluded to in English, unless by Dr Moore in his *View of Italy*. His account is

false and flippant, full of stale jests about old men and young wives, and wondering at so great an effect from so slight a cause. How so acute and severe an observer of mankind as the author of *Zeluco* could wonder at this is inconceivable. He knew that a basin of water spilt on Mrs. Masham's gown deprived the Duke of Marlborough of his command, and led to the inglorious peace of Utrecht—that Louis XIV. was plunged into the most desolating wars, because his minister was nettled at his finding fault with a window, and wished to give him another occupation—that Helen lost Troy—that Lucretia expelled the Tarquins from Rome—and that Cava brought the Moors to Spain—that an insulted husband led the Gauls to Clusium, and thence to Rome—that a single verse of Frederick II. of Prussia on the Abbé de Bornis, and a jest on Madame de Pompadour, led to the battle of Rosbach—that the elopement of Dearbhorgil with MacMurchad conducted the English to the slavery of Ireland—that a personal pique between Maria Antoinette and the Duke of Orleans precipitated the first expulsion of the Bourbons—and, not to multiply instances, that Commodus, Domitian, and Caligula fell victims not to their public tyranny, but to private vengeance—and that an order to make Cromwell disembark from the ship in which he would have sailed to America destroyed both King and Commonwealth. After these instances, on the least reflection, it is indeed extraordinary in Dr. Moore to seem surprised that a man used to command, who had served and swayed in the most important offices, should fiercely resent, in a fierce age, an unpunished affront, the grossest that can be offered to a man, be he prince or peasant. The age of Faliero is little to the purpose, unless to favour it—

"The young man's wrath is like straw on fire,
But like red-hot steel is the old man's ire."

"Young men soon give and soon forget affronts,
Old age is slow at both."

Laugier's reflections are more philosophical:—"Tale fu il fine ignominioso di un' uomo, che la sua nascita, la sua età, il suo carattere dovevano tener lontano dalle passioni produttrici di grandi delitti. I suoi *talenti* per lungo tempo esercitati ne' maggiori impieghi, la sua capacità sperimentata ne' governi e nelle ambasciate, gli avevano acquistato la stima e la fiducia de' cittadini, ed avevano uniti i suffragj per collocarlo alla testa

della repubblica. Innalzato ad un grado che terminava gloriosamente la sua vita, il risentimento di un' ingiuria leggiera insinuò nel suo cuore tal veleno che bastò a corrompere le antiche sue qualità, e a condurlo al termine dei scellerati; serio esempio, che prova *non esservi età, in cui la prudenza umana sia sicura, e che nell' uomo restano sempre passioni capaci a disonorarlo, quando non invigili sopra se stesso.*"*

Where did Dr. Moore find that Marino Faliero begged his life? I have searched the chroniclers, and find nothing of the kind: it is true that he avowed all. He was conducted to the place of torture, but there is no mention made of any application for mercy on his part; and the very circumstance of their having taken him to the rack seems to argue anything but his having shown a want of firmness, which would doubtless have been also mentioned by those minute historians, who by no means favour him: such, indeed, would be contrary to his character as a soldier, to the age in which he lived, and at which he died, as it is to the truth of history. I know no justification, at any distance of time, for calumniating an historical character; surely truth belongs to the dead, and to the unfortunate: and they who have died upon a scaffold have generally had faults enough of their own, without attributing to them that which the very incurring of the perils which conducted them to their violent death renders, of all others, the most improbable. The black veil which is painted over the place of Marino Faliero amongst the Doges, and the Giants' Staircase where he was crowned, and discrowned, and decapitated, struck forcibly upon my imagination; as did his fiery character and strange story. I went, in 1819, in search of his tomb more than once to the church San Giovanni e San Paolo: and, as I was standing before the monument of another family, a priest came up to me and said, "I can show you finer monuments than that." I told him that I was in search of that of the Faliero family, and particularly of the Doge Marino's. "Oh," said he, "I will show it you;" and conducting me to the outside, pointed out a sarcophagus in the wall with an illegible inscription. He said that it had been in a convent adjoining, but was removed after the French came, and placed in its present situation; that he had seen the tomb opened at its removal; there were still some bones remaining, but no positive

* Laugier, Hist. de la Répub. de Venise.

vestige of the decapitation. The equestrian statue of which I have made mention in the third act as before that church is not, however, of a Faliero, but of some other now obsolete warrior, although of a later date. There were two other Doges of this family prior to Marino; Ordelafo, who fell in battle at Zara, in 1117 (where his descendant afterwards conquered the Huns), and Vital Faliero, who reigned in 1082. The family, originally from Fano, was of the most illustrious in blood and wealth in the city of once the most wealthy and still the most ancient families in Europe. The length I have gone into on this subject will show the interest I have taken in it. Whether I have succeeded or not in the tragedy, I have at least transferred into our language an historical fact worthy of commemoration.

It is now four years that I have meditated this work; and before I had sufficiently examined the records, I was rather disposed to have made it turn on a jealousy in Faliero. But, perceiving no foundation for this in historical truth, and aware that jealousy is an exhausted passion in the drama, I have given it a more historical form. I was, besides, well advised by the late Matthew Lewis on that point, in talking with him of my intention at Venice in 1817. "If you make him jealous," said he, "recollect that you have to contend with established writers, to say nothing of Shakspeare, and an exhausted subject:—stick to the old fiery Doge's natural character, which will bear you out, if properly drawn: and make your plot as regular as you can." Sir William Drummond gave me nearly the same counsel. How far I have followed these instructions, or whether they have availed me, is not for me to decide. I have had no view to the stage; in its present state it is, perhaps, not a very exalted object of ambition; besides, I have been too much behind the scenes to have thought it so at any time. And I cannot conceive any man of irritable feeling putting himself at the mercies of an audience. The sneering reader, and the loud critic, and the tart review, are scattered and distant calamities; but the trampling of an intelligent or of an ignorant audience on a production which, be it good or bad, has been a mental labour to the writer, is a palpable and immediate grievance, heightened by a man's doubt of their competency to judge, and his certainty of his own imprudence in electing them his judges. Were I capable of writing a play which could be deemed stage-worthy, success would give me.

no pleasure, and failure great pain. It is for this reason that, even during the time of being one of the committee of one of the theatres, I never made the attempt, and never will. But surely there is dramatic power somewhere, where Joanna Baillie, and Milman, and John Wilson exist. The "City of the Plague" and the "Fall of Jerusalem" are full of the best *matériel* for tragedy that has been seen since Horace Walpole, except passages of Rithwald and De Montfort. It is the fashion to underrate Horace Walpole; firstly, because he was a nobleman, and secondly, because he was a gentleman; but, to say nothing of the composition of his incomparable letters, and of the "Castle of Otranto," he is the "Ultimus Romanorum," the author of the "Mysterious Mother," a tragedy of the highest order, and not a puling love-play. He is the father of the first romance and of the last tragedy in our language, and surely worthy of a higher place than any living writer, be he who he may.

In speaking of the drama of "Marino Faliero," I forgot to mention, that the desire of preserving, though still too remote, a nearer approach to unity than the irregularity, which is the reproach of the English theatrical compositions, permits, has induced me to represent the conspiracy as already formed, and the Doge acceding to it; whereas, in fact, it was of his own preparation, and that of Israel Bertuccio. The other characters (except that of the Duchess), incidents, and almost the time, which was wonderfully short for such a design in real life, are strictly historical, except that all the consultations took place in the palace. Had I followed this, the unity would have been better preserved; but I wished to produce the Doge in the full assembly of the conspirators, instead of monotonously placing him always in dialogue with the same individuals. For the real facts, I refer to the Appendix.

MARINO FALIERO, DOGE OF VENICE.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.		First Citizen.
MARINO FALIERO, <i>Doge of Venice.</i>		<i>Second Citizen.</i>
BERTUCCIO FALIERO, <i>Nephew of the Doge.</i>		<i>Third Citizen.</i>
LIONI, <i>a Patrician and Senator.</i>		VINCENZO, { <i>Officers belonging to the Ducal Palace.</i>
BENINTENDE, <i>Chief of the Council of Ten.</i>		PIETRO, }
		BATTISTA, }
MICHEL STENO, <i>One of the three Capi of the Forty.</i>		<i>Secretary of the Council of Ten.</i>
ISRAEL BERTUCCIO, <i>Chief of the Arsenal,</i>	} <i>Conspirators.</i>	<i>Guards, Conspirators, Citizens, The Council of Ten, The Granta, &c. &c.</i>
PHILIP CALENDARO,		
DAGOLINO,		
BERTRAM,		
<i>Signor of the Night,</i>	{ <i>"Signore di Notte," one of the Officers belonging to the Republic.</i>	
WOMEN.		
		ANGIOLINA, <i>Wife to the Doge.</i>
		MARIANNA, <i>her friend.</i>
		<i>Female Attendants, &c.</i>
		Scene, VENICE—in the year 1355.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*An Antechamber in the Ducal Palace.*

PIETRO *speaks, in entering, to BATTISTA.*

Pie. Is not the messenger return'd?

Bat.

Not yet;

I have sent frequently, as you commanded,
But still the Signory is deep in council,
And long debate on Steno's accusation.

Pie. Too long—at least so thinks the Doge.

Bat.

How bears he

These moments of suspense?

Pie.

With struggling patience.

Placed at the ducal table, cover'd o'er
With all the apparel of the state; petitions,
Despatches, judgments, acts, reprieves, reports,

He sits as rapt in duty ; but whene'er
 He hears the jarring of a distant door,
 Or aught that intimates a coming step,
 Or murmur of a voice, his quick eye wanders,
 And he will start up from his chair, then pause,
 And seat himself again, and fix his gaze
 Upon some edict ; but I have observed
 For the last hour he has not turn'd a leaf.

Bat. 'T is said he is much moved,—and doubtless 't was
 Foul scorn in Steno to offend so grossly.

Pie. Ay, if a poor man : Steno's a partrician,
 Young, galliard, gay, and haughty.

Bat. Then you think
 He will not be judged hardly ?

Pie. 'T were enough
 He be judged justly, but 't is not for us
 To anticipate the sentence of the Forty.

Bat. And here it comes.—What news, Vincenzo ?

Enter VINCENZO.

Vin. 'T is
 Decided ; but as yet his doom's unknown :
 I saw the president in act to seal
 The parchment which will bear the Forty's judgment
 Unto the Doge, and hasten to inform him. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

The Ducal Chamber.

MARINO FALIERO, *Doge* ; and his Nephew, BERTUCCIO
 FALIERO.

Ber. F. 'T cannot be but they will do you justice.

Doge. Ay, such as the Avogadori did,
 Who sent up my appeal unto the Forty
 To try him by his peers, his own tribunal.

Ber. F. His peers will scarce protect him ; such an act
 Would bring contempt on all authority.

Doge. Know you not Venice ? Know you not the
 Forty ?
 But we shall see anon.

Ber. F. (addressing VINCENZO, then entering).

How now—what tidings?

Vin. I am charged to, tell his highness that the court
Has pass'd its resolution, and that, soon
As the due forms of judgment are gone through,
The sentence will be sent up to the Doge ;
In the mean time the Forty doth salute
The Prince of the Republic, and entreat
His acceptance of their duty.

Doge.

Yes—

They are wondrous dutiful, and ever humble.
Sentence is pass'd, you say?

Vin.

It is, your highness :

The president was sealing it, when I
Was call'd in, that no moment might be lost
In forwarding the intimation due
Not only to the Chief of the Republic,
But the complainant, both in one united.

Ber. F. Are you aware, from aught you have perceived,
Of their decision?

Vin.

No, my lord ; you know
The secret custom of the courts in Venice.

Ber. F. True ; but there still is something given to guess,
Which a shrewd gleaner and quick eye would catch at ;
A whisper, or a murmur, or an air
More or less solemn spread o'er the tribunal.
The Forty are but men—most worthy men,
And wise, and just, and cautious—this I grant—
And secret as the grave to which they doom
The guilty : but with all this, in their aspects—
At least in some, the juniors of the number—
A searching eye, an eye like yours, Vincenzo,
Would read the sentence ere it was pronounced.

Vin. My lord, I came away upon the moment,
And had no leisure to take note of that
Which pass'd among the judges, even in seeming ;
My station near the accused too, Michel Steno,
Made me——

Doge (abruptly). And how look'd he ? deliver that.

Vin. Calm, but not overcast, he stood resign'd
To the decree, whate'er it were ;—but lo !
It comes, for the perusal of his highness.

Enter the SECRETARY of the Forty.

Sec. The high tribunal of the Forty sends
Health and respect to the Doge Faliero,
Chief magistrate of Venice, and requests
His highness to peruse and to approve
The sentence pass'd on Michel Steno, born
Patrician, and arraign'd upon the charge
Contain'd, together with its penalty,
Within the rescript which I now present.

Doge. Retire, and wait without.

[*Exeunt SECRETARY and VINCENZO.*

Take thou this paper:

The misty letters vanish from my eyes ;
I cannot fix them.

Ber. F. Patience, my dear uncle :
Why do you tremble thus?—nay, doubt not, all
Will be as could be wish'd.

Doge.

Say on.

Ber. F. (reading).

“Decreed

In council, without one dissenting voice,
That Michel Steno, by his own confession,
Guilty on the last night of Carnival
Of having graven on the ducal throne
The following words——”

Doge.

Wouldst thou repeat them?

Wouldst *thou* repeat them—*thou*, a Faliero,
Harp on the deep dishonour of our house,
Dishonour'd in its chief—that chief the prince
Of Venice, first of cities?—To the sentence.

Ber. F. Forgive me, my good lord ; I will obey—
(*Reads*). “That Michel Steno be detain'd a month
In close arrest.”

Doge.

Proceed.

Ber. F. •

My lord, 't is finish'd.

Doge. How say you?—finish'd ! Do I dream?—'t is
false—

Give me the paper—(*Snatches the paper and reads*)—

“T is decreed in council

That Michel Steno”——Nephew, thine arm !

Ber. F.

Nay,

Cheer up, be calm ; this transport is uncall'd for—
Let me seek some assistance.

Doge.

Stop, sir—Stir not—

'Tis past.

Ber. F. I cannot but agree with you
The sentence is too slight for the offence;
It is not honourable in the Forty
To affix so slight a penalty to that
Which was a foul affront to you, and even
To them, as being your subjects; but 't is not
Yet without remedy: you can appeal
To them once more, or to the Avogadori,
Who, seeing that true justice is withheld,
Will now take up the cause they once declined,
And do you right upon the bold delinquent.
Think you not thus, good uncle? why do you stand
So fix'd? You heed me not:—I pray you, hear me!
*Doge (dashing down the ducal bonnet, and offering to
trample upon it, exclaims, as he is withheld by his
nephew).*

Oh! that the Saracen were in St. Mark's!
Thus would I do him homage.

Ber. F. For the sake
Of Heaven and all its saints, my lord—

Doge. Away!
Oh, that the Genoese were in the port!
Oh, that the Huns whom I o'erthrew at Zara
Were ranged around the palace!

Ber. F. 'T is not well
In Venice' Duke to say so.

Doge. Venice' Duke!
Who now is Duke in Venice? let me see him,
That he may do me right.

Ber. F. If you forget
Your office, and its dignity and duty,
Remember that of man, and curb this passion.
The Duke of Venice—

Doge (interrupting him). There is no such thing—
It is a word—nay, worse—a worthless by-word:
The most despised, wrong'd, outraged, helpless wretch,
Who begs his bread, if 't is refused by one,
May win it from another kinder heart:
But he, who is denied his right by those
Whose place it is to do no wrong, is poorer
Than the rejected beggar—he's a slave—

And that am I, and thou, and all our house,
Even from this hour; the meanest artisan
Will point the finger, and the haughty noble
May spit upon us:—where is our redress?

Ber. F. The law, my prince——

Doge (interrupting him). You see what it has done;
I ask'd no remedy but from the law,
I sought no vengeance but redress by law,
I call'd no judges but those named by law;
As sovereign, I appeal'd unto my subjects,
The very subjects who had made me sovereign,
And gave me thus a double right to be so.
The rights of place and choice, of birth and service,
Honours and years, these scars, these hoary hairs,
The travel, toil, the perils, the fatigues,
The blood and sweat of almost eighty years,
Were weigh'd i' the balance, 'gainst the foulest stain,
The grossest insult, most contemptuous crime
Of a rank, rash patrician—and found wanting!
And this is to be borne!

Ber. F. I say not that:—
In case your fresh appeal should be rejected,
We will find other means to make all even.

Doge. Appeal again! art thou my brother's son?
A scion of the house of Faliero?
The nephew of a Doge? and of that blood
Which hath already given three dukes to Venice?
But thou say'st well—we must be humble now.

Ber. F. My princely uncle! you are too much moved;—
I grant it was a gross offence, and grossly
Left without fitting punishment: but still
This fury doth exceed the provocation,
Or any provocation: if we are wrong'd,
We will ask justice; if it be denied,
We'll take it; but may do all this in calmness—
Deep Vengeance is the daughter of deep Silence.
I have yet scarce a third part of your years,
I love our house, I honour you, its chief,
The guardian of my youth, and its instructor—
But though I understand your grief, and enter
In part of your disdain, it doth appal me
To see your anger, like our Adrian waves,
O'ersweep all bounds, and foam itself to air.

Doge. I tell thee—~~must~~ I tell thee—what thy father
Would have required no words to comprehend?
Hast thou no feeling save the external sense
Of torture from the touch? hast thou no soul—
No pride—no passion—no deep sense of honour?

Ber. F. 'T is the first time that honour has been doubted,
And were the last, from any other sceptic.

Doge. You know the full offence of this born villain,
This creeping, coward, rank, acquitted felon,
Who threw his sting into a poisonous libel,
And on the honour of—Oh God! my wife,
The nearest, dearest part of all men's honour,
Left a base slur to pass from mouth to mouth
Of loose mechanics, with all coarse foul comments,
And villainous jests, and blasphemies obscene;
While sneering nobles, in more polish'd guise,
Whisper'd the tale, and smiled upon the lie
Which made me look like them—a courteous wittol,
Patient—ay, proud, it may be, of dishonour.

Ber. F. But still it was a lie—you knew it false,
And so did all men.

Doge. Nephew, the high Roman
Said, "Cæsar's wife must not even be suspected,"
And put her from him.

Ber. F. True—but in those days——

Doge. What is it that a Roman would not suffer,
That a Venetian prince must bear? old Dandolo
Refused the diadem of all the Cæsars,
And wore the ducal cap I trample on,
Because 't is now degraded.

Ber. F. 'T is even so.

Doge. It is—it is;—I did not visit on
The innocent creature thus most vilely slander'd
Because she took an old man for her lord,
For that he had been long her father's friend
And patron of her house, as if there were
No love in woman's heart but lust of youth
And beardless faces;—I did not for this
Visit the villain's infamy on her,
But craved my country's justice on his head,
The justice due unto the humblest being
Who hath a wife whose faith is sweet to him,

Who hath a home whose hearth is dear to him,
 Who hath a name whose honour's all to him,
 When these are tainted by the accursing breath
 Of calumny and scorn.

Ber. F. And what redress
 Did you expect as his fit punishment?

Doge. Death! Was I not the sovereign of the state—
 Insulted on his very throne, and made
 A mockery to the men who should obey me?
 Was I not injured as a husband? scorn'd
 As man? reviled, degraded, as a prince?
 Was not offence like his a complication
 Of insult and of treason?—and he lives!
 Had he instead of on the Doge's throne
 Stamp'd the same brand upon a peasant's stool,
 His blood had gilt the threshold; for the carle
 Had stabb'd him on the instant.

Ber. F. Do not doubt it,
 He shall not live till sunset—leave to me
 The means, and calm yourself.

Doge. Hold, nephew: this
 Would have sufficed but yesterday; at present
 I have no further wrath against this man.

Ber. F. What mean you? is not the offence redoubled
 By this most rank?—I will not say—acquittal;
 For it is worse, being full acknowledgment
 Of the offence, and leaving it unpunish'd?

Doge. It is *redoubled*, but not now by him:
 The Forty hath decreed a month's arrest—
 We must obey the Forty.

Ber. F. Obey *them*!
 Who have forgot their duty to the sovereign?

Doge. Why yes;—boy, you perceive it then at last:
 Whether as fellow-citizen who sues
 • For justice, or as sovereign who commands it,
 They have defrauded me of both my rights
 (For here the sovereign is a citizen);
 But, notwithstanding, harm not thou a hair
 Of Steno's head—he shall not wear it long.

Ber. F. Not twelve hours longer, had you left to me
 The mode and means: if you had calmly heard me,
 I never meant this miscreant should escape,

But wish'd you to repress such gusts of passion,
That we more surely might devise together
His taking off.

Doge. No, nephew, he must live ;
At least, just now—a life so vile as his
Were nothing at this hour ; in th' olden time
Some sacrifices ask'd a single victim,
Great expiations had a hecatomb. '

Ber. F. Your wishes are my law : and yet I fain
Would prove to you how near unto my heart
The honour of our house must ever be.

Doge. Fear not ; you shall have time and place of proof :
But be not thou too rash, as I have been.
I am ashamed of my own anger now ;
I pray you, pardon me.

Ber. F. Why, that's my uncle !
The leader, and the statesman, and the chief
Of commonwealths, and sovereign of himself !
I wonder'd to perceive you so forget
All prudence in your fury at these years,
Although the cause——

Doge. Ay, think upon the cause——
Forget it not :—When you lie down to rest,
Let it be black among your dreams ; and when
The morn returns, so let it stand between
The sun and you, as an ill-omen'd cloud
Upon a summer day of festival :
So will it stand to me ;—but speak not, stir not,—
Leave all to me ; we shall have much to do,
And you shall have a part.—But now retire,
'T is fit I were alone.

Ber. F. (*taking up and placing the ducal bonnet on the table*).

Ere I depart,
I pray you to resume what you have spurn'd,
Till you can change it haply for a crown.
And now I take my leave, imploring you
In all things to rely upon my duty
As doth become your near and faithful kinsman,
And not less loyal citizen and subject.

[*Exit BERTUCCIO FALIERO.*

Doge(solus). Adieu, my worthy nephew.—Hollow bauble !

[*Taking up the ducal cap.*

Beset with all the thorns that line a crown,

Without investing the insulted brow
 With the all-swaying majesty of kings ;
 Thou idle, gilded, and degraded toy,
 Let me resume thee as I would a vizor. [Puts it on.
 How my brain aches beneath thee ! and my temples
 Throb feverish under thy dishonest weight.
 Could I not turn thee to a diadem ?
 Could I not shatter the Briarean sceptre
 Which in this hundred-handed senate rules,
 Making the people nothing, and the prince
 A pageant ? In my life I have achieved
 Tasks not less difficult—achieved for them,
 Who thus repay me ! Can I not requite them ?
 Oh for one year ! Oh ! but for even a day
 Of my full youth, while yet my body served
 My soul as serves the generous steed his lord,
 I would have dash'd amongst them, asking few
 In aid to overthrow these sworn patricians ;
 But now I must look round for other hands
 To serve this hoary head ;—but it shall plan
 In such a sort as will not leave the task
 Herculean, though as yet 't is but a chaos
 Of darkly brooding thoughts : my fancy is
 In her first work, more nearly to the light
 Holding the sleeping images of things
 For the selection of the pausing judgment.—
 The troops are few in—

Enter VINCENZO.

Vin. There is one without
 Craves audience of your highness.

Doge. I'm unwell—
 I can see no one, not even a patrician—
 Let him refer his business to the council.

Vin. My lord, I will deliver your reply ;
 It cannot much import—he's a plebeian,
 The master of a galley, I believe.

Doge. How ! did you say the patron of a galley ?
 That is—I mean—a servant of the state :
 Admit him, he may be on public service.

[Exit VINCENZO.

Doge (solus). This patron may be sounded ; I will try
 I know the people to be discontented : [him.

They have cause, since Sapienza's adverse day,
 When Genoa conquer'd : they have further cause,
 Since they are nothing in the state, and in
 The city worse than nothing—mere machines,
 To serve the nobles' most patrician pleasure.
 The troops have long arrears of pay, oft promised,
 And murmur deeply—any hope of change
 Will draw them forward : they shall pay themselves
 With plunder :—but the priests—I doubt the priesthood
 Will not be with us ; they have hated me
 Since that rash hour, when, madden'd with the drone,
 I smote the tardy bishop at Treviso,
 Quickening his holy march ; yet, ne'ertheless,
 They may be won, at least their chief at Rome,
 By some well-timed concessions ; but, above
 All things, I must be speedy : at my hour
 Of twilight little light of life remains.
 Could I free Venice, and avenge my wrongs,
 I had lived too long, and willingly would sleep
 Next moment with my sires ; and, wanting this,
 Better than sixty of my fourscore years
 Had been already where—how soon, I care not—
 The whole must be extinguish'd ; better that
 They ne'er had been, than drag me on to be
 The thing these arch-oppressors fain would make me.
 Let me consider—of efficient troops
 There are three thousand posted at——

Enter VINCENZO and ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Vin. May it please
 Your highness, the same patron whom I spake of
 Is here to crave your patience.

Doge. Leave the chamber,
Vincenzo.— [*Exit VINCENZO.*]

Sir, you may advance—what would you ?

I. Ber. Redress.

Doge. Of whom ?

I. Ber. Of God and of the Doge.

Doge. Alas ! my friend, you seek it of the twain
 Of least respect and interest in Venice.

You must address the council.

I. Ber. 'T were in vain ;
 For he who injured me is one of them.

Doge. There's blood upon thy face—how came it there?

I. Ber. 'Tis mine, and not the first I've shed for Venice,
But the first shed by a Venetian hand :
A noble smote me.

Doge. Doth he live?

I. Ber. Not long—

But for the hope I had and have, that you,
My prince, yourself a soldier, will redress
Him, whom the laws of discipline and Venice
Permit not to protect himself :—if not—
I say no more.

Doge. But something you would do—
Is it not so?

I. Ber. I am a man, my lord.

Doge. Why so is he who smote you.

I. Ber. He is call'd so ;

Nay, more, a noble one—at least, in Venice :
But since he hath forgotten that I am one,
And treats me like a brute, the brute may turn—
'T is said the worm will.

Doge. Say—his name and lineage?

I. Ber. Barbaro.

Doge. What was the cause? or the pretext?

I. Ber. I am the chief of the arsenal, employ'd

At present in repairing certain galleys
But roughly used by the Genoese last year.
This morning comes the noble Barbaro
Full of reproof, because our artisans
Had left some frivolous order of his house,
To execute the state's decree : I dared
To justify the men—he raised his hand ;—
Behold my blood ! the first time it e'er flow'd
Dishonourably.

Doge. Have you long time served?

I. Ber. So long as to remember Zara's siege,
And fight beneath the chief who beat the Huns there,
Sometime my general, now the Doge Faliero.—

Doge. How I are we comrades?—the state's ducal robes
Sit newly on me, and you were appointed
Chief of the arsenal ere I came from Rome ;
So that I recognised you not. Who placed you?

I. Ber. The late Doge ; keeping still my old command
As patron of a galley : my new office

Was given as the reward of certain scars
 (So was your predecessor pleased to say):
 I little thought his bounty would conduct me
 To his successor as a helpless plaintiff;
 At least, in such a cause.

Doge. Are you much hurt?

I. Ber. Irreparably in my self-esteem.

Doge. Speak out; fear nothing: Being stung at heart,
 What would you do to be revenged on this man?

I. Ber. That which I dare not name, and yet will do.

Doge. Then wherefore came you here?

I. Ber. I come for justice,

Because my general is Doge, and will not
 See his old soldier trampled on. Had any
 Save Faliero fill'd the ducal throne,
 This blood had been wash'd out in other blood.

Doge. You come to me for justice—unto *me*!
 The Doge of Venice, and I cannot give it;
 I cannot even obtain it—'t was denied
 To me most solemnly an hour ago!

I. Ber. How says your highness?

Doge. Steno is condemn'd
 To a month's confinement.

I. Ber. What! the same who dared
 To stain the ducal throne with those foul words,
 That have cried shame to every ear in Venice?

Doge. Ay, doubtless they have echo'd o'er the arsenal,
 Keeping due time with every hammer's clink
 As a good jest to jolly artisans;
 Or making chorus to the creaking oar,
 In the vile tune of every galley-slave,
 Who, as he sung the merry stave, exulted
 He was not a shamed dotard like the Doge.

I. Ber. Is 't possible? a month's imprisonment!
 No more for Steno?

Doge. You have heard the offence,
 And now you know his punishment; and then
 You ask redress of *me*! Go to the Forty,
 Who pass'd the sentence upon Michel Steno;
 They'll do as much by Barbaro, no doubt.

I. Ber. Ah! dared I speak my feelings!

Doge. Give them breath.
 Mine have no further outrage to endure.

I. Ber. Then in a word, it rests but on your word
To punish and avenge—I will not say
My petty wrong, for what is a mere blow,
However vile, to such a thing as I am?—
But the base insult done your state and person.

Doge. You overrate my power, which is a pageant.
This cap is not the monarch's crown; these robes
Might move compassion, like a beggar's rags;
Nay, more, a beggar's are his own, and these
But lent to the poor puppet, who must play
Its part with all its empire in this ermine.

I. Ber. Wouldst thou be king?

Doge. Yes—of a happy people.

I. Ber. Wouldst thou be sovereign lord of Venice?

Doge. Ay,

If that the people shared that sovereignty,
So that nor they nor I were further slaves
To this o'ergrown aristocratic Hydra,
The poisonous heads of whose envenom'd body
Have breathed a pestilence upon us all.

I. Ber. Yet, thou wast born, and still hast lived, patrician.

Doge. In evil hour was I so born; my birth
Hath made me Doge to be insulted: but
I lived and toil'd a soldier and a servant
Of Venice and her people, not the senate;
Their good and my own honour were my guerdon.
I have fought and bled; commanded, ay, and conquer'd;
Have made and marr'd peace oft in embassies,
As it might chance to be our country's 'vantage;
Have traversed land and sea in constant duty,
Through almost sixty years, and still for Venice,
My fathers' and my birthplace, whose dear spires,
Rising at distance o'er the blue Lagoon,
It was reward enough for me to view
Once more; but not for any knot of men,
Nor sect, nor faction, did I bleed or sweat!
But would you know why I have done all this?
Ask of the bleeding pelican why she
Hath ripp'd her bosom? Had the bird a voice,
She'd tell thee 't was for *all* her little ones.

I. Ber. And yet they made thee duke.

Doge. They made me so;
I sought it not, the flattering fetters met me

Returning from my Roman embassy,
 And never having hitherto refused
 Toil, charge, or duty for the state, I did not,
 At these late years, decline what was the highest
 Of all in seeming, but of all most base
 In what we have to do and to endure :
 Bear witness for me thou, my injured subject,
 When I can neither right myself nor thee.

I. Ber. You shall do both, if you possess the will ;
 And many thousands more not less oppress'd,
 Who wait but for a signal—will you give it ?

Doge. You speak in riddles.

I. Ber. Which shall soon be read
 At peril of my life, if you disdain not
 To lend a patient ear.

Doge. Say on.

I. Ber. Not thou,
 Nor I alone, are injured and abused,
 Contemn'd and trampled on ; but the whole people
 Groan with the strong conception of their wrongs ;
 The foreign soldiers in the senate's pay
 Are discontented for their long arrears ;
 The native mariners, and civic troops,
 Feel with their friends ; for who is he amongst them
 Whose brethren, parents, children, wives, or sisters,
 Have not partook oppression, or pollution,
 From the patricians ? And the hopeless war
 Against the Genoese, which is still maintain'd
 With the plebeian blood, and treasure wrung
 From their hard earnings, has inflamed them further :
 Even now—but, I forget that speaking thus,
 Perhaps I pass the sentence of my death ! [death ?]

Doge. And suffering what thou hast done—fear'st thou
 Be silent then, and live on, to be beaten
 By those for whom thou hast bled.

I. Ber. No, I will speak
 At every hazard ; and if Venice' Doge
 Should turn delator, be the shame on him,
 And sorrow too ; for he will lose far more
 Than I.

Doge. From me fear nothing ; out with it ! [secret

I. Ber. Know then, that there are met and sworn in
 A band of brethren, valiant hearts and true ;

Men who have provèd all fortunes, and have long
 Grieved over that of Venice, and have right
 To do so ; having served her in all climes,
 And having rescued her from foreign foes,
 Would do the same from those within her walls.
 They are not numerous, nor yet too few
 For their great purpose ; they have arms, and means,
 And hearts, and hopes, and faith, and patient courage.

Doge. For what then do they pause ?

I. Ber. An hour to strike.

Doge (aside). Saint Mark's shall strike that hour !

I. Ber. I now have placed

My life, my honour, all my earthly hopes
 Within thy power, but in the firm belief
 That injuries like ours, sprung from one cause,
 Will generate one vengeance : should it be so,
 Be our chief now—our sovereign hereafter.

Doge. How many are ye ?

I. Ber. I'll not answer that
 Till I am answer'd.

Doge. How, sir ! do you menace ?

I. Ber. No ; I affirm. I have betray'd myself ;
 But there's no torture in the mystic wells
 Which undermine your palace, nor in those
 Not less appalling cells, the "leaden roofs,"
 To force a single name from me of others,
 The Pozzi and the Piombi were in vain ;
 They might wring blood from me, but treachery never.
 And I would pass the fearful "Bridge of Sighs,"
 Joyous that mine must be the last that e'er
 Would echo o'er the Stygian wave which flows
 Between the murderers and the murder'd, washing
 The prison and the palace walls : there are
 Those who would live to think on 't, and avenge me.

Doge. At such your power and purpose, why come here
 To sue for justice, being in the course
 To do yourself due right ?

I. Ber. Because the man,
 Who claims protection from authority,
 Showing his confidence and his submission
 To that authority, can hardly be
 Suspected of combining to destroy it.
 Had I sate down too humbly with this blow,

A moody brow and mutter'd threats had made me
 A mark'd man to the Forty's inquisition ;
 But loud complaint, however angrily
 It shapes its phrase, is little to be fear'd,
 And less distrusted. But, besides all this,
 I had another reason.

Doge. What was that?

I. Ber. Some rumours that the Doge was greatly moved
 By the reference of the Avogadori
 Of Michel Steno's sentence to the Forty
 Had reach'd me. I had served you, honour'd you,
 And felt that you were dangerously insulted,
 Being of an order of such spirits, as
 Requite tenfold both good and evil : 't was
 My wish to prove and urge you to redress.
 Now you know all ; and that I speak the truth,
 My peril be the proof.

Doge. You have deeply ventured ;
 But all must do so who would greatly win :
 Thus far I'll answer you—your secret's safe.

I. Ber. And is this all?

Doge. Unless with all intrusted,
 What would you have me answer?

I. Ber. I would have you
 Trust him who leaves his life in trust with you.

Doge. But I must know your plan, your names, and
 numbers ;
 The last may then be doubled, and the former
 Matured and strengthen'd.

I. Ber. We're enough already ;
 You are the sole ally we covet now.

Doge. But bring me to the knowledge of your chiefs.

I. Ber. That shall be done upon your formal pledge
 To keep the faith that we will pledge to you.

Doge. When? where?

I. Ber. This night I'll bring to your apartment
 Two of the principals: a greater number
 Were hazardous.

Doge. Stay, I must think of this.—
 What if I were to trust myself amongst you,
 And leave the palace?

I. Ber. You must come alone.

Doge. With but my nephew.

I. Ber. Not were he your son.

Doge. Wretch ! darest thou name my son ? He died in
At Sapienza for this faithless state. [arms

Oh ! that he were alive, and I in ashes !

Or that he were alive ere I be ashes !

I should not need the dubious aid of strangers.

I. Ber. Not one of all those strangers whom thou
But will regard thee with a filial feeling, [doubtest,
So that thou keep'st a father's faith with them.

Doge. The die is cast. Where is the place of meeting ?

I. Ber. At midnight I will be alone and mask'd
Where'er your highness pleases to direct me,
To wait your coming, and conduct you where
You shall receive our homage, and pronounce
Upon our project.

Doge. At what hour arises
The moon ?

I. Ber. Late, but the atmosphere is thick and dusky,
'T is a sirocco.

Doge. At the midnight hour, then,
Near to the church where sleep my sires ; the same,
Twin-named from the apostles, John and Paul ;
A gondola, with one oar only, will
Lurk in the narrow channel which glides by.
Be there.

I. Ber. I will not fail.

Doge. And now retire——

I. Ber. In the full hope your highness will not falter
In your great purpose. Prince, I take my leave.

[Exit ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Doge (solus). At midnight, by the church Saints John
and Paul,

Where sleep my noble fathers, I repair——

To what ? to hold a council in the dark

With common ruffians leagued to ruin states !

• And will not my great sires leap from the vault,

Where lie two doges who preceded me,

And pluck me down amongst them ? Would they could !

For I should rest in honour with the honour'd.

Alas ! I must not think of them, but those

Who have made me thus unworthy of a name

Noble and brave as aught of consular

On Roman marbles ; but I will redeem it

Back to its antique lustre in our annals,
 By sweet revenge on all that's base in Venice,
 And freedom to the rest, or leave it black
 To all the growing calumnies of time,
 Which never spare the fame of him who fails,
 But try the Cæsar, or the Cataline,
 By the true touchstone of desert—success.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*An apartment in the Ducal Palace.*

ANGIOLINA (*wife of the DOGE*) and MARIANNA.

Ang. What was the Doge's answer?

Mar. That he was

That moment summon'd to a conference;
 But 't is by this time ended. I perceived
 Not long ago the senators embarking;
 And the last gondola may now be seen
 Gliding into the throng of barks which stud
 The glittering waters.

Ang. Would he were return'd!
 He has been much disquieted of late;
 And Time, which has not tamed his fiery spirit,
 Nor yet enfeebled even his mortal frame,
 Which seems to me more nourish'd by a soul
 So quick and restless that it would consume
 Less hardy clay—Time has but little power
 On his resentments or his griefs. Unlike
 To other spirits of his order, who,
 In the first burst of passion, pour away
 Their wrath or sorrow, all things wear in him
 An aspect of eternity: his thoughts,
 His feelings, passions, good or evil, all
 Have nothing of old age; and his bold brow
 Bears but the scars of mind, the thoughts of years,
 Not their decrepitude: and he of late
 Has been more agitated than his wont.
 Would he were come! for I alone have power
 Upon his troubled spirit.

Mar. It is true,
 His highness has of late been greatly moved

By the affront of Steno, and with cause:
 But the offender doubtless even now
 Is doom'd to expiate his rash insult with
 Such chastisement as will enforce respect
 To female virtue, and to noble blood.

Ang. 'T was a gross insult ; but I heed it not
 For the rash scorner's falsehood in itself,
 But for the effect, the deadly deep impression
 Which it has made upon Faliero's soul,
 The proud, the fiery, the austere—austere
 To all save me : I tremble when I think
 To what it may conduct.

Mar. Assuredly
 The Doge cannot suspect you ?

Ang. Suspect *me* !
 Why Steno dared not : when he scrawl'd his lie,
 Grovelling by stealth in the moon's glimmering light,
 His own still conscience smote him for the act,
 And every shadow on the walls frown'd shame
 Upon his coward calumny.

Mar. 'T were fit
 He should be punish'd grievously.

Ang. He is so.

Mar. What ! is the sentence pass'd ? is he condemn'd ?

Ang. I know not that, but he has been detected.

Mar. And deem you this enough for such foul scorn ?

Ang. I would not be a judge in my own cause,
 Nor do I know what sense of punishment
 May reach the soul of ribalds such as Steno ;
 But if his insults sink no deeper in
 The minds of the inquisitors than they
 Have ruffled mine, he will, for all acquittance,
 Be left to his own shamelessness or shame.

Mar. Some sacrifice is due to slander'd virtue.

Ang. Why, what is virtue if it needs a victim ?
 Or if it must depend upon men's words ?
 The dying Roman said, "'t was but a name :"
 It were indeed no more, if human breath
 Could make or mar it.

Mar. Yet full many a dame,
 Stainless and faithful, would feel all the wrong
 Of such a slander ; and less rigid ladies,
 Such as abound in Venice, would be loud

And all-inexorable in their cry
For justice.

Ang. This but proves it is the name
And not the quality they prize: the first
Have found it a hard task to hold their honour,
If they require it to be blazon'd forth;
And those who have not kept it, seek its seeming
As they would look out for an ornament
Of which they feel the want, but not because
They think it so; they live in others' thoughts,
And would seem honest as they must seem fair.

Mar. You have strange thoughts for a patrician dame.

Ang. And yet they were my father's; with his name,
The sole inheritance he left.

Mar. You want none;
Wife to a prince, the chief of the Republic.

Ang. I should have sought none though a peasant's bride,
But feel not less the love and gratitude
Due to my father, who bestow'd my hand
Upon his early, tried, and trusted friend,
The Count Val di Marino, now our Doge.

Mar. And with that hand did he bestow your heart?

Ang. He did so, or it had not been bestow'd.

Mar. Yet this strange disproportion in your years,
And, let me add, disparity of tempers,
Might make the world doubt whether such an union
Could make you wisely, permanently happy.

Ang. The world will think with worldlings; but my
Has still been in my duties, which are many, [heart
But never difficult.

Mar. And do you love him?

Ang. I love all noble qualities which merit
Love, and I loved my father, who first taught me
To single out what we should love in others,
And to subdue all tendency to lend
The best and purest feelings of our nature
To baser passions. He bestow'd my hand
Upon Faliero: he had known him noble,
Brave, generous; rich in all the qualities
Of soldier, citizen, and friend; in all
Such have I found him as my father said.
His faults are those that dwell in the high bosoms
Of men who have commanded; too much pride,

And the deep passions fiercely foster'd by
 The uses of patricians, and a life
 Spent in the storms of state and war; and also
 From the quick sense of honour, which becomes
 A duty to a certain sign, a vice
 When overstrain'd, and this I fear in him.
 And then he has been rash from his youth upwards,
 Yet temper'd by redeeming nobleness
 In such sort, that the wariest of republics
 Has lavish'd all its chief employs upon him,
 From his first fight to his last embassy,
 From which on his return the dukedom met him.

Mar. But previous to this marriage, had your heart
 Ne'er beat for any of the noble youth,
 Such as in years had been more meet to match
 Beauty like yours? or since have you ne'er seen
 One, who, if your fair hand were still to give,
 Might now pretend to Loredano's daughter?

Ang. I answer'd your first question when I said
 I married.

Mar. And the second?

Ang. Needs no answer.

Mar. I pray your pardon, if I have offended.

Ang. I feel no wrath, but some surprise: I knew not
 That wedded bosoms could permit themselves
 To ponder upon what they *now* might choose,
 Or ought save their past choice.

Mar. 'T is their past choice
 That far too often makes them deem they would
 Now choose more wisely, could they cancel it.

Ang. It may be so. I knew not of such thoughts.

Mar. Here comes the Doge—shall I retire?

Ang. It may
 Be better you should quit me; he seems wrapt
 In thought.—How pensively he takes his way!

[*Exit MARIANNA.*]

Enter the DOGE and PIETRO.

Doge (musing). There is a certain Philip Calendaro
 Now in the Arsenal, who holds command
 Of eighty men, and has great influence
 Besides on all the spirits of his comrades;
 This man, I hear, is bold and popular,

Sudden and daring, and yet secret ; 't would
 Be well that he were won : I needs must hope
 That Israel Bertuccio has secured him,
 But fain would be——

Pie. My lord, pray pardon me
 For breaking in upon your meditation ;
 The Senator Bertuccio, your kinsman,
 Charged me to follow and inquire y^our pleasure
 To fix an hour when he may speak with you.

Doge. At sunset.—Stay a moment—let me see—
 Say in the second hour of night. [*Exit PIETRO.*]

Ang. My lord !

Doge. My dearest child, forgive me—why delay
 So long approaching me ?—I saw you not.

Ang. You were absorb'd in thought, and he who now
 Has parted from you might have words of weight
 To bear you from the senate.

Doge. From the senate ?

Ang. I would not interrupt him in his duty
 And theirs.

Doge. The senate's duty ! you mistake ;
 'T is we who owe all service to the senate.

Ang. I thought the Duke had held command in Venice.

Doge. He shall.—But let that pass.—We will be jocund.
 How fares it with you ? have you been abroad ?
 The day is overcast, but the calm wave
 Favours the gondolier's light skimming oar ;
 Or have you held a levee of your friends ?
 Or has your music made you solitary ?
 Say—is there aught that you would will within
 The little sway now left the Duke ? or aught
 Of fitting splendour, or of honest pleasure,
 Social or lonely, that would glad your heart,
 To compensate for many a dull hour, wasted
 On an old man oft moved with many cares ?
 Speak, and 't is done.

Ang. You're ever kind to me.
 I have nothing to desire, or to request,
 Except to see you oftener and calmer.

Doge. Calmer ?

Ang. Ay, calmer, my good lord.—Ah, why
 Do you still keep apart, and walk alone,
 And let such strong emotions stamp your brow,

As not betraying their full import, yet
Disclose too much?

Doge. Disclose too much!—of what?
What is there to disclose?

Ang. A heart so ill
At ease.

Doge. 'Tis nothing, child.—But in the state
You know what daily cares oppress all those
Who govern this precarious commonwealth;
Now suffering from the Genoese without,
And malcontents within—'t is this which makes me
More pensive and less tranquil than my wont.

Ang. Yet this existed long before, and never,
Till in these late days did I see you thus.
Forgive me; there is something at your heart
More than the mere discharge of public duties,
Which long use and a talent like to yours
Have render'd light, nay, a necessity,
To keep your mind from stagnating. 'T is not
In hostile states, nor perils, thus to shake you,—
You, who have stood all storms and never sunk,
And climb'd up to the pinnacle of power
And never fainted by the way, and stand
Upon it, and can look down steadily
Along the depth beneath, and ne'er feel dizzy.
Were Genoa's galleys riding in the port,
Were civil fury raging in St. Mark's,
You are not to be wrought on, but would fall,
As you have risen, with an unalter'd brow:
Your feelings now are of a different kind;
Something has stung your pride, not patriotism.

Doge. Pride! Angiolina? Alas! none is left me.

Ang. Yes—the same sin that overthrew the angels,
And of all sins most easily besets
Mortals the nearest to the angelic nature:
The vile are only vain; the great are proud.

Doge. I *had* the pride of honour, of *your* honour,
Deep at my heart—But let us change the theme.

Ang. Ah no!—As I have ever shared your kindness
In all things else, let me not be shut out
From your distress: were it of public import,
You know I never sought, would never seek,
To win a word from you; but feeling now

Your grief is private, it belongs to me
To lighten or divide it. Since the day
When foolish Steno's ribaldry detected
Unfix'd your quiet, you are greatly changed,
And I would soothe you back to what you were.

Doge. To what I was!—have you heard Steno's sentence?

Ang. No.

Doge. A month's arrest.

Ang. Is it not enough?

Doge. Enough!—yes, for a drunken galley slave,
Who, stung by stripes, may murmur at his master;
But not for a deliberate, false, cool villain,
Who stains a lady's and a prince's honour
Even on the throne of his authority.

Ang. There seems to me enough in the conviction
Of a patrician guilty of a falsehood:
All other punishment were light unto
His loss of honour.

Doge. Such men have no honour;
They have but their vile lives—and these are spared.

Ang. You would not have him die for this offence?

Doge. Not *now*.—being still alive, I'd have him live
Long as *he* can; he has ceased to merit death;
The guilty saved hath damn'd his hundred judges,
And he is pure, for now his crime is theirs.

Ang. Oh! had this false and flippant libeller
Shed his young blood for his absurd lampoon,
Ne'er from that moment could this breast have known
A joyous hour, or dreamless slumber more.

Doge. Does not the law of Heaven say blood for blood?
And he who *taints* kills more than he who sheds it.
Is it the *pain* of blows, or *shame* of blows,
That makes such deadly to the sense of man?
Do not the laws of man say blood for honour,—
And, less than honour, for a little gold?
Say not the laws of nations blood for treason?
Is't nothing to have fill'd these veins with poison
For their once healthful current? is it nothing
To have stain'd your name and mine—the noblest names?
Is't nothing to have brought into contempt
A prince before his people? to have fail'd
In the respect accorded by mankind
To youth in woman, and old age in man?

To virtue in your sex, and dignity
In ours?—but let them look to it who have saved him.

Ang. Heaven bids us to forgive our enemies.

Doge. Doth Heaven forgive her own? Is Satan saved
From wrath eternal?

Ang. Do not speak thus wildly—
Heaven will alike forgive you and your foes.

Doge. Amen! May Heaven forgive them!

Ang. And will you?

Doge. Yes, when they are in heaven!

Ang. And not till then?

Doge. What matters my forgiveness? an old man's,
Worn out, scorn'd, spurn'd, abused; what matters then
My pardon more than my resentment, both
Being weak and worthless? I have lived too long;
But let us change the argument.—My child!
My injured wife, the child of Loredano,
The brave, the chivalrous, how little deem'd
Thy father, wedding thee unto his friend,
That he was linking thee to shame!—Alas!
Shame without sin, for thou art faultless. Hadst thou
But had a different husband, any husband
In Venice save the Doge, this blight, this brand,
This blasphemy had never fallen upon thee.
So young, so beautiful, so good, so pure,
To suffer this, and yet be unavenged!

Ang. I am too well avenged, for you still love me,
And trust, and honour me; and all men know
That you are just, and I am true: what more
Could I require, or you command?

Doge. 'T is well,
And may be better; but whate'er betide,
Be thou at least kind to my memory.

Ang. Why speak you thus?

Doge. It is no matter why;
But I would still, whatever others think,
Have your respect both now and in my grave.

Ang. Why should you doubt it? has it ever fail'd?

Doge. Come hither, child; I would a word with you.
Your father was my friend; unequal fortune
Made him my debtor for some courtesies
Which bind the good more firmly: when, oppress'd
With his last malady, he will'd our union,

It was not to repay me, long repaid
 Before by his great loyalty in friendship ;
 His object was to place your orphan beauty
 In honourable safety from the perils
 Which, in this scorpion nest of vice, assail
 A lonely and undower'd maid. I did not
 Think with him, but would not oppose the thought
 Which soothed his death-bed.

Ang. I have not forgotten
 The nobleness with which you bade me speak
 If my young heart held any preference
 Which would have made me happier ; nor your offer
 To make my dowry equal to the rank
 Of aught in Venice, and forego all claim
 My father's last injunction gave you.

Doge. Thus
 'T was not a foolish dotard's vile caprice,
 Nor the false edge of aged appetite,
 Which made me covetous of girlish beauty,
 And a young bride : for in my fieriest youth
 I sway'd such passions ; nor was this my age
 Infected with that leprosy of lust
 Which taints the hoariest years of vicious men,
 Making them ransack to the very last
 The dregs of pleasure for their vanish'd joys ;
 Or buy in selfish marriage some young victim,
 Too helpless to refuse a state that's honest,
 Too feeling not to know herself a wretch.
 Our wedlock was not of this sort ; you had
 Freedom from me to choose, and urged in answer
 Your father's choice.

Ang. I did so ; I would do so
 In face of earth and heaven ; for I have never
 Repented for my sake ; sometimes for yours,
 In pondering o'er your late disquietudes.

Doge. I knew my heart would never treat you harshly ;
 I knew my days could not disturb you long ;
 And then the daughter of my earliest friend,
 His worthy daughter, free to choose again,
 Wealthier and wiser, in the ripest bloom
 Of womanhood, more skilful to select
 By passing these probationary years
 Inheriting a prince's name and riches,

Secured, by the short*penance of enduring
 An old man for some summers, against all
 That law's chicane or envious kinsmen might
 Have urged against her right ; my best friend's child
 Would choose more fitly in respect of years,
 And not less truly in a faithful heart.

Ang. My lord, I look'd but to my father's wishes,
 Hallow'd by his last words, and to my heart
 For doing all its*duties, and replying
 With faith to him with whom I was affianced.
 Ambitious hopes ne'er cross'd my dreams ; and should
 The hour you speak of come, it will be seen so.

Doge. I do believe you ; and I know you true :
 For love, romantic love, which in my youth
 I knew to be illusion, and ne'er saw
 Lasting, but often fatal, it had been
 No lure for me, in my most passionate days,
 And could not be so now, did such exist.
 But such respect, and mildly paid regard
 As a true feeling for your welfare, and
 A free compliance with all honest wishes,—
 A kindness to your virtues, watchfulness
 Not shown, but shadowing o'er such little failings
 As youth is apt in, so as not to check
 Rashly, but win you from them ere you knew
 You had been won, but thought the change your choice ;
 A pride not in your beauty, but your conduct ;
 A trust in you ; a patriarchal love,
 And not a doting homage ; friendship, faith,—
 Such estimation in your eyes as these
 Might claim, I hoped for.

Ang. And have ever had.

Doge. I think so. For the difference in our years
 You knew it, choosing me, and chose : I trusted
 Not to my qualities, nor would have faith
 In such, nor outward ornaments of nature,
 Were I still in my five and twentieth spring ;
 I trusted to the blood of Loredano
 Pure in your veins ; I trusted to the soul
 God gave you—to the truths your father taught you—
 To your belief in Heaven—to your mild virtues—
 To your own faith and honour, for my own.

Ang. You have done well.—I thank you for that trust,

Which I have never for one moment ceased
 'To honour you the more for.

Doge. Where is honour,
 Innate and precept-strengthen'd, 't is the rock
 Of faith connubial : where it is not—where
 Light thoughts are lurking, or the vanities
 Of worldly pleasure rankle in the heart,
 Or sensual throbs convulse it, well I know,
 'T were hopeless for humanity to dream
 Of honesty in such infected blood,
 Although 't were wed to him it covets most :
 An incarnation of the poet's god
 In all his marble-chisell'd beauty, or
 The demi-deity, Alcides, in
 His majesty of superhuman manhood,
 Would not suffice to bind where virtue is not ;
 It is consistency which forms and proves it :
 Vice cannot fix, and virtue cannot change.
 The once fall'n woman must for ever fall ;
 For vice must have variety, while virtue
 Stands like the sun, and all which rolls around
 Drinks life, and light, and glory from her aspect.

Ang. And seeing, feeling thus this truth in others,
 (I pray you pardon me ;) but wherefore yield you
 To the most fierce of fatal passions, and
 Disquiet your great thoughts with restless hate
 Of such a thing as Steno ?

Doge. You mistake me.
 It is not Steno who could move me thus ;
 Had it been so, he should—but let that pass.

Ang. What is 't you feel so deeply, then, even now ?

Doge. The violated majesty of Venice,
 At once insulted in her lord and laws.

Ang. Alas ! why will you thus consider it ?

Doge. I have thought on 't till—but let me lead you
 back

To what I urg'd ; all these things being noted,
 I wedded you ; the world then did me justice
 Upon the motive, and my conduct proved
 They did me right, while yours was all to praise :
 You had all freedom, all respect, all trust
 From me and mine ; and, born of those who made
 Princes at home, and swept kings from their thrones

On foreign shores, in all things you appear'd
Worthy to be our first of native dames.

Ang. To what does this conduct?

Doge.

To thus much—that

A miscreant's angry breath may blast it all—
A villain, whom for his unbridled bearing,
Even in the midst of our great festival,
I caused to be conducted forth, and taught
How to demean himself in ducal chambers ;
A wretch like this may leave upon the wall
The blighting venom of his sweltering heart,
And this shall spread itself in general poison,
And woman's innocence, man's honour, pass
Into a by-word ; and the doubly felon
(Who first insulted virgin modesty
By a gross affront to your attendant damsels
Amidst the noblest of our dames in public)
Requite himself for his most just expulsion
By blackening publicly his sovereign's consort
And be absolved by his upright compeers.

Ang. But he has been condemn'd into captivity.

Doge. For such as him a dungeon were acquittal ;
And his brief term of mock-arrest will pass
Within a palace. But I've done with him ;
The rest must be with you.

Ang.

With me, my lord?

Doge. Yes, Angiolina. Do not marvel ; I
Have let this prey upon me till I feel
My life cannot be long ; and fain would have you
Regard the injunctions you will find within
This scroll (*Giving her a paper*)—Fear not ; they are for
your advantage :

Read them hereafter at the fitting hour.

Ang. My lord, in life, and after life, you shall
Be honour'd still by me : but may your days
Be many yet—and happier than the present !
This passion will give way, and you will be
Serene, and what you should be—what you were.

Doge. I will be what I should be, or be nothing ;
But never more—oh ! never, never more,
O'er the few days or hours which yet await
The blighted old age of Faliero, shall
Sweet quiet shed her sunset ! Never more

Those summer shadows rising from the past
 Of a not ill-spent nor inglorious life,
 Mellowing the last hours as the night approaches,
 Shall soothe me to my moment of long rest.
 I had but little more to ask, or hope,
 Save the regards due to the blood and sweat,
 And the soul's labour through which I had toil'd
 To make my country honour'd. As her servant—
 Her servant, though her chief—I would have gone
 Down to my fathers with a name serene
 And pure as theirs ; but this has been denied me.—
 Would I had died at Zara !

Ang. There you saved
 The state ; then live to save her still. A day,
 Another day like that would be the best
 Reproof to them, and sole revenge for you.

Doge. But one such day occurs within an age ;
 My life is little less than one, and 't is
 Enough for Fortune to have granted *once*,
 That which scarce one more favour'd citizen
 May win in many states and years. But why
 Thus speak I ? Venice has forgot that day—
 Then why should I remember it ?—Farewell,
 Sweet Angiolina ! I must to my cabinet ;
 There 's much for me to do—and the hour hastens.

Ang. Remember what you were.

Doge. It were in vain !
 Joy's recollection is no longer joy,
 While sorrow's memory is a sorrow still.

Ang. At least, whate'er may urge, let me implore
 That you will take some little pause of rest :
 Your sleep for many nights has been so turbid,
 That it had been relief to have awaked you,
 Had I not hoped that Nature would o'erpower
 At length the thoughts which shock your slumbers thus.
 An hour of rest will give you to your toils
 With fitter thoughts and freshen'd strength.

Doge. I cannot—
 I must not, if I could ; for fever was
 Such reason to be watchful : yet a few—
 Yet a few days and dream-perturbed nights,
 And I shall slumber well—but where ?—no matter,
 Adieu, my Angiolina.

Ang. Let me be
An instant—yet an instant your companion !
I cannot bear to leave you thus.

Doge. Come then,
My gentle child—forgive me ; thou wert made
For better fortunes than to share in mine,
Now darkling in their close toward the deep vale
Where Death sits robed in his all-sweeping shadow.
When I am gone—it may be sooner than
Even these years warrant, for there is that stirring
Within, above, around, that in this city
Will make the cemeteries populous
As e'er they were by pestilence or war,—
When I *am* nothing, let that which I *was*
Be still sometimes a name on thy sweet lips,
A shadow in thy fancy, of a thing
Which would not have thee mourn it, but remember.
Let us begone, my child—the time is pressing. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

A retired spot near the Arsenal.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO and PHILIP CALENDARO.

Cal. How sped you, Israel, in your late complaint?

I. Ber. Why, well.

Cal. Is't possible? will he be punish'd?

I. Ber.

Yes.

Cal. With what? a mulct or on arrest?

I. Ber.

With death !

Cal. Now you rave, or must intend revenge,
Such as I counsell'd you, with your own hand.

I. Ber. Yes ; and for one sole draught of hate, forego
The great redress we meditate for Venice,
And change a life of hope for one of exile ;
• Leaving one scorpion crush'd, and thousands stinging
My friends, my family, my countrymen !
No, Calendaro ; these same drops of blood,
Shed shamefully, shall have the whole of his
For their requital—but not only his ;
We will not strike for private wrongs alone ;
Such are for selfish passions and rash men,
But are unworthy a tyrannicide.

Cal. You have more patience than I care to boast.
 Had I been present when you bore this insult,
 I must have slain him, or expired myself
 In the vain effort to repress my wrath. [marr'd :

I. Ber. Thank Heaven you were not—all had else been
 As 't is, our cause looks prosperous still.

Cal. You saw
 The Doge—what answer gave he ?

I. Ber. That there was
 No punishment for such as Barbaro.

Cal. I told you so before, and that 't was idle
 To think of justice from such hands.

I. Ber. At least,
 It lull'd suspicion, showing confidence.
 Had I been silent, not a sbirro but
 Had kept me in his eye, as meditating
 A silent, solitary, deep revenge.

Cal. But wherefore not address you to the Council?
 The Doge is a mere puppet, who can scarce
 Obtain right for himself. Why speak to him?

I. Ber. You shall know that hereafter.

Cal. Why not now?

I. Ber. Be patient but till midnight. Get your musters,
 And bid our friends prepare their companies :
 Set all in readiness to strike the blow,
 Perhaps in a few hours ; we have long waited
 For a fit time—that hour is on the dial,
 It may be, of to-morrow's sun : delay
 Beyond may breed us double danger. See
 That all be punctual at our place of meeting,
 And arm'd, excepting those of the Sixteen,
 Who will remain among the troops to wait
 The signal.

Cal. These brave words have breathed new life
 Into my veins ; I'm sick of these protracted
 And hesitating councils : day on day
 Crawl'd on, and added but another link
 To our long fetters, and some fresher wrong
 Inflicted on our brethren or ourselves,
 Helping to swell our tyrants' bloated strength.
 Let us but deal upon them, and I care not
 For the result, which must be death or freedom !
 I'm weary to the heart of finding neither.

I. Ber. We will be free in life or death ! the grave
Is chainless. Have you all the musters ready?
And are the sixteen companies completed
To sixty?

Cal. All save two, in which there are
Twenty-five wanting to make up the number.

I. Ber. No matter ; we can do without. Whose are
they?

Cal. Bertram's and old Soranzo's, both of whom
Appear less forward in the cause than we are.

I. Ber. Your fiery nature makes you deem all those
Who are not restless cold : but there exists
Oft in concentrated spirits not less daring
Than in more loud avengers. Do not doubt them.

Cal. I do not doubt the elder ; but in Bertram
There is a hesitating softness, fatal
To enterprise like ours : I've seen that man
Weep like an infant o'er the misery
Of others, heedless of his own, though greater ;
And in a recent quarrel I beheld him
Turn sick at sight of blood, although a villain's.

I. Ber. The truly brave are soft of heart and eyes,
And feel for what their duty bids them do.
I have known Bertram long ; there doth not breathe
A soul more full of honour.

Cal. It may be so :
I apprehend less treachery than weakness ;
Yet as he has no mistress, and no wife
To work upon his milkiness of spirit,
He may go through the ordeal ; it is well
He is an orphan, friendless save in us :
A woman or a child had made him less
Than either in resolve.

I. Ber. Such ties are not
For those who are call'd to the high destinies
Which purify corrupted commonwealths ;
We must forget all feelings save the *one*,
We must resign all passions save our purpose,
We must behold no object save our country,
And only look on death as beautiful,
So that the sacrifice ascend to heaven,
And draw down freedom on her evermore.

Cal. But if we fail——

I. Ber. They never fail who die
 In a great cause : the block may soak their gore ;
 Their heads may sodden in the sun ; their limbs
 Be strung to city gates and castle walls—
 But still their spirit walks abroad. Though years
 Elapse, and others share as dark a doom,
 They but augment the deep and sweeping thoughts
 Which overpower'd all others, and conduct
 The world at last to freedom. What were we,
 If Brutus had not lived? He died in giving
 Rome liberty, but left a deathless lesson—
 A name which is a virtue, and a soul
 Which multiplies itself throughout all time,
 When wicked men wax mighty, and a state
 Turns servile. He and his high friend were styled
 "The last of Romans !" Let us be the first
 Of true Venetians, sprung from Roman sires.

Cal. Our fathers did not fly from Attila
 Into these isles, where palaces have sprung
 On banks redeem'd from the rude ocean's ooze,
 To own a thousand despots in his place.
 Better bow down before the Hun, and call
 A Tartar lord, than these swoln silkworm masters !
 The first at least was man, and used his sword
 As sceptre : these unmanly creeping things
 Command our swords, and rule us with a word
 As with a spell.

I. Ber. It shall be broken soon.
 You say that all things are in readiness ;
 To-day I have not been the usual round,
 And why thou knowest ; but thy vigilance
 Will better have supplied my care : these orders
 In recent council to redouble now
 Our efforts to repair the galleys, have
 Lent a fair colour to the introduction
 Of many of our cause into the arsenal,
 As new artificers for their equipment,
 Or fresh recruits obtain'd in haste to man
 The hoped-for fleet.—Are all supplied with arms?

Cal. All who were deem'd trustworthy : there are some
 Whom it were well to keep in ignorance
 Till it be time to strike, and then supply them ;
 When in the heat and hurry of the hour

They have no opportunity to pause,
But needs must on with those who will surround them.

I. Ber. You have said well. Have you remark'd all such?

Cal. I've noted most; and caused the other chiefs
To use like caution in their companies.
As far as I have seen, we are enough
To make the enterprise secure, if 't is
Commenced to-morrow; but, till 't is begun,
Each hour is pregnant with a thousand perils.

I. Ber. Let the Sixteen meet at the wonted hour,
Except Soranzo, Nicoletto Blondo,
And Marco Giuda, who will keep their watch
Within the arsenal, and hold all ready,
Expectant of the signal we will fix on.

Cal. We will not fail.

I. Ber. Let all the rest be there;
I have a stranger to present to them.

Cal. A stranger! doth he know the secret?

I. Ber. Yes.

Cal. And have you dared to peril your friends' lives
On a rash confidence in one we know not?

I. Ber. I have risk'd no man's life except my own—
Of that be certain: he is one who may
Make our assurance doubly sure, according
His aid; and if reluctant, he no less
Is in our power: he comes alone with me,
And cannot 'scape us; but he will not swerve.

Cal. I cannot judge of this until I know him:
Is he one of our order?

I. Ber. Ay, in spirit,
Although a child of greatness; he is one—
Who would become a throne, or overthrow one—
One who has done great deeds, and seen great changes;
No tyrant, though bred up to tyranny;
Valiant in war, and sage in council: noble
In nature, although haughty; quick, yet wary:
Yet for all this, so full of certain passions,
That if once stirr'd and baffled, as he has been
Upon the tenderest points, there is no Fury
In Grecian story like to that which wrings
His vitals with her burning hands, till he
Grows capable of all things for revenge;

And add too, that his mind is liberal,
 He sees and feels the people are oppress'd,
 And shares their sufferings. Take him all in all,
 We have need of such, and such have need of us.

Cal. And what part would you have him take with us?

I. Ber. It may be, that of chief.

Cal.

What! and resign

Your own command as leader?

I. Ber.

Even so.

My object is to make your cause end well,
 And not to push myself to power. Experience,
 Some skill, and your own choice, had mark'd me out
 To act in trust as your commander, till
 Some worthier should appear: if I have found such
 As you yourselves shall own more worthy, think you
 That I would hesitate from selfishness,
 And, covetous of brief authority,
 Stake our deep interest on my single thoughts,
 Rather than yield to one above me in
 All leading qualities? No, Calendaro,
 Know your friend better; but you all shall judge.
 Away! and let us meet at the fix'd hour.
 Be vigilant, and all will yet go well.

Cal. Worthy Bertuccio, I have known you ever
 Trusty and brave, with head and heart to plan
 What I have still been prompt to execute.
 For my own part, I seek no other chief;
 What the rest will decide I know not, but
 I am with you, as I have ever been,
 In all our undertakings. Now farewell,
 Until the hour of midnight sees us meet.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*Scene, the Space between the Canal and the Church of San Giovanni e San Paolo. An equestrian Statue before it. A Gondola lies in the Canal at some distance.*

Enter the DOGE alone, disguised.

Doge (solus). I am before the hour, the hour whose voice,
 Pealing into the arch of night, might strike
 These palaces with ominous tottering,
 And rock their marbles to the corner-stone,

Waking the sleepers from some hideous dream
 Of indistinct but awful augury
 Of that which will befall them. Yes, proud city!
 Thou must be cleansed of the black blood which makes
 A lazaret-house of tyranny: the task [thee
 Is forced upon me, I have sought it not;
 And therefore was I punish'd, seeing this
 Patrician pestilence spread on and on,
 Until at length it smote me in my slumbers,
 And I am tainted, and must wash away
 The plague spots in the healing wave. Tall fane!
 Where sleep my fathers, whose dim statues shadow
 The floor which doth divide us from the dead,
 Where all the pregnant hearts of our bold blood,
 Moulder'd into a mite of ashes, hold
 In one shrunk heap what once made many heroes,
 When what is now a handful shook the earth—
 Fane of the tutelary saints who guard our house!
 Vault where two Doges rest—my sires! who died
 The one of toil, the other in the field,
 With a long race of other lineal chiefs
 And sages, whose great labours, wounds, and state
 I have inherited,—let the graves gape,
 Till all thine aisles be peopled with the dead,
 And pour them from thy portals to gaze on me!
 I call them up, and them and thee to witness
 What it hath been which put me to this task—
 Their pure high blood, their blazon-roll of glories,
 Their mighty name dishonour'd all *in* me,
 Not *by* me, but by the ungrateful nobles
 We fought to make our equals, not our lords:
 And chiefly thou, Ordelafo the brave,
 Who perish'd in the field, where I since conquer'd,
 Battling at Zara, did the hecatombs
 Of thine and Venice' foes, there offer'd up
 By thy descendant, merit such acquittance?
 Spirits! smile down upon me; for my cause
 Is yours, in all life now can be of yours,—
 Your fame, your name, all mingled up in mine,
 And in the future fortunes of our race!
 Let me but prosper, and I can make this city
 Free and immortal, and our house's name
 Worthier of what you were, now and hereafter!

Enter ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

I. Ber. Who goes there?

Doge.

A friend to Venice.

I. Ber.

'T is he.

Welcome, my lord,—you are before the time.

Doge. I am ready to proceed to your assembly.

I. Ber. Have with you.—I am proud and pleased to see
Such confident alacrity. Your doubts
Since our last meeting, then, are all dispell'd?

Doge. Not so—but I have set my little left
Of life upon this cast: the die was thrown
When I first listen'd to your treason.—Start not!
That is the word; I cannot shape my tongue
To syllable black deeds into smooth names,
Though I be wrought on to commit them. When
I heard you tempt your sovereign, and forbore
To have you dragg'd to prison, I became
Your guiltiest accomplice: now you may,
If it so please you, do as much by me.

I. Ber. Strange words, my lord, and most unmerited;
I am no spy, and neither are we traitors.

Doge. *We—We!*—no matter—you have earn'd the
To talk of *us*.—But to the point.—If this [right
Attempt succeeds, and Venice, render'd free
And flourishing, when we are in our graves,
Conducts her generations to our tombs,
And makes her children with their little hands
Strew flowers o'er her deliverers' ashes, then
The consequence will sanctify the deed,
And we shall be like the two Bruti in
The annals of hereafter; but if not,
If we should fail, employing bloody means
And secret plot, although to a good end,
Still we are traitors, honest Israel;—thou
No less than he who was thy sovereign
Six hours ago, and now thy brother rebel.

I. Ber. 'T is not the moment to consider thus,
Else I could answer.—Læ. us to the meeting
Or we may be observed in lingering here.

Doge. We *are* observed, and have been.

I. Ber.

We observed!

Let me discover—and this steel——

Doge. Put up;
Here are no human witnesses : look there—
What see you ?

I. Ber. Only a tall warrior's statue
Bestriding a proud steed, in the dim light
Of the dull moon.

Doge. That warrior was the sire
Of my sire's fathers, and that statue was
Decreed to him by the twice rescued city :—
Think you that he looks down on us or no ?

I. Ber. My lord, these are mere fantasies ; there are
No eyes in marble.

Doge. But there are in Death.
I tell thee, man, there is a spirit in
Such things that acts and sees, unseen, though felt ;
And, if there be a spell to stir the dead,
'Tis in such deeds as we are now upon.
Deem'st thou the souls of such a race as mine
Can rest, when he, their last descendant chief,
Stands plotting on the brink of their pure graves
With stung plebeians ?

I. Ber. It had been as well
To have ponder'd this before —, ere you embark'd
In our great enterprise.—Do you repent ?

Doge. No—but I *feel*, and shall do to the last.
I cannot quench a glorious life at once,
Nor dwindle to the thing I now must be,
And take men's lives by stealth, without some pause :
Yet doubt me not ; it is this very feeling,
And knowing *what* has wrung me to be thus,
Which is your best security. There's not
A roused mechanic in your busy plot
So wrong'd as I, so fall'n, so loudly call'd
To his redress : the very means I am forced
•By these fell tyrants to adopt is such,
That I abhor them doubly for the deeds
Which I must do to pay them back for theirs.

I. Ber. Let us away—hark—the hour strikes.

Doge. On—on—
It is our knell, or that of Venice—On.

I. Ber. Say rather, 't is her freedom's rising peal
Of triumph.—This way—we are near the place.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

The House where the Conspirators meet.

DAGOLINO, DORO, BERTRAM, FEDELE, TREVISANO, CALENDARO,
ANTONIO DELLE BENDE, &c. &c.

Cal. (entering). Are all here?

Dag. All with you; except the three
On duty, and our leader Israel,
Who is expected momentarily.

Cal. Where's Bertram?

Ber. Here!

Cal. Have you not been able to complete
The number wanting in your company?

Ber. I had mark'd out some: but I have not dared
To trust them with the secret, till assured
That they were worthy faith.

Cal. There is no need
Of trusting to their faith; *who*, save ourselves
And our more chosen comrades, is aware
Fully of our intent? they think themselves
Engaged in secret to the Signory,
To punish some more dissolute young nobles
Who have defied the law in their excesses;
But once drawn up, and their new swords well flesh'd
In the rank hearts of the more odious senators,
They will not hesitate to follow up
Their blow upon the others, when they see
The example of their chief, and I for one
Will set them such, that they for very shame
And safety will not pause till all have perish'd.

Ber. How say you? *all!*

Cal. Whom wouldst thou spare?

Ber. *I spare!*

I have no power to spare. I only question'd,
Thinking that even amongst these wicked men
There might be some, whose age and qualities
Might mark them out for pity.

Cal. Yes, such pity
As when the viper hath been cut to pieces,
The separate fragments quivering in the sun,
In the last energy of venomous life,

Deserve and have. Why, I should think as soon
 Of pitying some particular fang which made
 One in the jaw of the swoln serpent, as
 Of saving one of these : they form but links -
 Of one long chain ; one mass, one breath, one body ;
 They eat, and drink, and live, and breed together,
 Revel and lie, oppress, and kill in concert,—
 So let them die as *one* !

Dag. Should *one* survive,
 He would be dangerous as the whole ; it is not
 Their number, be it tens or thousands, but
 The spirit of this aristocracy
 Which must be rooted out ; and if there were
 A single shoot of the old tree in life,
 'T would fasten in the soil, and spring again
 To gloomy verdure and to bitter fruit.
 Bertram, we must be firm !

Cal. Look to it well,
 Bertram ; I have an eye upon thee.

Ber. Who
 Distrusts me ?

Cal. Not I ; for if I did so
 Thou wouldst not now be there to talk of trust :
 It is thy softness, not thy want of faith,
 Which makes thee to be doubted.

Ber. You should know
 Who hear me, who and what I am ; a man
 Roused like yourselves to overthrow oppression ;
 A kind man, I am apt to think, as some
 Of you have found me ; and if brave or no,
 You, Calendaro, can pronounce, who have seen me
 Put to the proof ; or, if you should have doubts,
 I'll clear them on your person !

Cal. You are welcome,
 When once our enterprise is o'er, which must not
 Be interrupted by a private brawl.

Ber. I am no brawler ; but can bear myself
 As far among the foe as any he
 Who hears me ; else why have I been selected
 To be of your chief comrades ? but no less
 I own my natural weakness ; I have not
 Yet learn'd to think of indiscriminate murder
 Without some sense of shuddering ; and the sight

Of blood which spouts through hoary scalps is not
 To me a thing of triumph, nor the death
 Of men surprised a glory. Well—too well
 I know that we must do such things on those
 Whose acts have raised up such avengers ; but
 If there were some of these who could be saved
 From out this sweeping fate, for our own sakes
 And for our honour, to take off some stain
 Of massacre, which else pollutes it wholly,
 I had been glad ; and see no cause in this
 For sneer, nor for suspicion !

Dag. Calm thee, Bertram,
 For we suspect thee not, and take good heart.
 It is the cause, and not our will, which asks
 Such actions from our hands ; we'll wash away
 All stains in freedom's fountain !

Enter ISRAEL BERTUCCIO, and the DOGE, disguised.

Dag. Welcome, Israel.

Consp. Most welcome.—Brave Bertuccio, thou art late—
 Who is this stranger ?

Cal. It is time to name him.
 Our comrades are even now prepared to greet him
 In brotherhood, as I have made it known
 That thou wouldst add a brother to our cause,
 Approved by thee, and thus approved by all,
 Such is our trust in all thine actions. Now
 Let him unfold himself.

I. Ber. Stranger, step forth !

[*The Doge discovers himself.*]

Consp. To arms !—we are betray'd—it is the Doge !
 Down with them both ! our traitorous captain, and
 The tyrant he hath sold us to.

Cal. (drawing his sword). Hold ! hold !
 Who moves a step against them dies. Hold ! hear
 Bertuccio—What ! are you appall'd to see
 A lone, unguarded, weaponless old man
 Amongst you ?—Israel, speak ; what means this mystery ?

I. Ber. Let them advance and strike at their own
 Ungrateful suicides ! for on our lives [bosoms,
 Depend their own, their fortunes, and their hopes.

Doge. Strike !—If I dreaded death, a death more fearful

Than any your rash weapons can inflict,
 I should not now be here : Oh, noble Courage !
 The eldest born of Fear, which makes you brave
 Against this solitary hoary head !
 See the bold chiefs, who would reform a state
 And shake down senates, mad with wrath and dread
 At sight of one patrician ! Butcher me !
 You can, I care not.—Israel, are these men
 The mighty hearts you spoke of ? look upon them !

Cal. Faith ! he hath shamed us, and deservedly,
 Was this your trust in your true chief, Bertuccio,
 To turn your swords against him and his guest ?
 Sheathe them, and hear him.

I. Ber. I disdain to speak.
 They might and must have known a heart like mine
 Incapable of treachery ; and the power
 They gave me to adopt all fitting means
 To further their design was ne'er abused.
 They might be certain that whoe'er was brought
 By me into this council had been led
 To take his choice—as brother, or as victim.

Doge. And which am I to be ? your actions leave
 Some cause to doubt the freedom of the choice.

I. Ber. My lord, we would have perish'd here together,
 Had these rash men proceeded ; but, behold,
 They are ashamed of that mad moment's impulse,
 And droop their heads ; believe me, they are such
 As I described them—speak to them.

Cal. Ay, speak ;
 We are all listening in wonder.

I. Ber. (*addressing the conspirators*). You are safe,
 Nay, more, almost triumphant—listen then,
 And know my words for truth.

Doge. You see me here,
 As one of you hath said, an old, unarm'd,
 Defenceless man ; and yesterday you saw me
 Presiding in the hall of ducal state,
 Apparent sovereign of our hundred isles,
 Robed in official purple, dealing out
 The edicts of a power which is not mine,
 Nor yours, but of our masters—the patricians.
 Why I was there you know, or think you know ;
 Why I am *here*, he who hath been most wrong'd,

He who among you hath been most insulted,
Outraged, and trodden on, until he doubt
If he be worm or no, may answer for me,
Asking of his own heart what brought him here?
You know my recent story, all men know it,
And judge of it far differently from those
Who sate in judgment to heap scorn on scorn.
But spare me the recital—it is here,
Here at my heart the outrage—but my words,
Already spent in unavailing plaints,
Would only show my feebleness the more,
And I come here to strengthen even the strong,
And urge them on to deeds, and not to war
With woman's weapons ; but I need not urge you.
Our private wrongs have sprung from public vices,
In this—I cannot call it commonwealth,
Nor kingdom, which hath neither prince nor people,
But all the sins of the old Spartan state
Without its virtues—temperance and valour.
The Lords of Lacedæmon were true soldiers,
But ours are Sybarites, while we are Helots,
Of whom I am the lowest, most enslaved ;
Although dress'd out to head a pageant, as
The Greeks of yore made drunk their slaves to form
A pastime for their children. You are met
To overthrow this monster of a state,
This mockery of a government, this spectre,
Which must be exorcised with blood,—and then
We will renew the times of truth and justice,
Condensing in a fair free commonwealth
Not rash equality but equal rights,
Proportion'd like the columns to the temple,
Giving and taking strength reciprocal,
And making firm the whole with grace and beauty,
So that no part could be removed without
Infringement of the general symmetry.
In operating this great change, I claim
To be one of you—if you trust in me ;
If not, strike home,—my life is compromised,
And I would rather fall by freemen's hands
Than live another day to act the tyrant
As delegate of tyrants ; such I am not,
And never have been—read it in our annals ;

I can appeal to my past government
 In many lands and cities ; they can tell you
 If I were an oppressor, or a man
 Feeling and thinking for my fellow-men.
 Haply had I been what the senate sought,
 A thing of robes and trinkets, dizen'd out
 To sit in state as for a sovereign's picture ;
 A popular scourge, a ready sentence-signer,
 A stickler for the Senate and "the Forty,"
 A sceptic of all measures which had not
 The sanction of "the Ten," a council-fawner,
 A tool, a fool, a puppet,—they had ne'er
 Foster'd the wretch who stung me. What I suffer
 Has reach'd me through my pity for the people ;
 That many know, and they who know not yet
 Will one day learn : meantime I do devote,
 Whate'er the issue, my last days of life—
 My present power such as it is, not that
 Of Doge, but of a man who has been great
 Before he was degraded to a Doge,
 And still has individual means and mind ;
 I stake my fame (and I had fame)—my breath—
 (The least of all, for its last hours are nigh)
 My heart, my hope, my soul, upon this cast !
 Such as I am, I offer me to you
 And to your chiefs : accept me or reject me,—
 A Prince who fain would be a citizen
 Or nothing, and who has left his throne to be so.

Cal. Long live Faliero !—Venice shall be free !

Consp. Long live Faliero !

I. Ber.

Comrades ! did I well ?

Is not this man a host in such a cause ?

Doge. This is no time for eulogies, nor place
 For exultation. Am I one of you ?

Cal. Ay, and the first among us, as thou hast been
 Of Venice—be our general and chief.

Doge. Chief !—general !—I was general at Zara,
 And chief in Rhodes and Cyprus, prince in Venice :
 I cannot stoop—that is, I am not fit
 To lead a band of—patriots : when I lay
 Aside the dignities which I have borne,
 'Tis not to put on others, but to be
 Mate to my fellows—but now to the point ;

Israel has stated to me your whole plan—
 'Tis bold, but feasible if I assist it,
 And must be set in motion instantly.

Cal. E'en when thou wilt. Is it not so, my friends?
 I have disposed all for a sudden blow;
 When shall it be then?

Doge.

At sunrise.

Ber.

So soon?

Doge. So soon?—so late—each hour accumulates
 Peril on peril, and the more so now
 Since I have mingled with you;—know you not
 The Council, and “the Ten?” the spies, the eyes
 Of the patricians dubious of their slaves,
 And now more dubious of the prince they have made one?
 I tell you, you must strike, and suddenly,
 Full to the Hydra's heart—its heads will follow.

Cal. With all my soul and sword, I yield assent;
 Our companies are ready, sixty each,
 And all now under arms by Israel's order;
 Each at their different place of rendezvous,
 And vigilant, expectant of some blow;
 Let each repair for action to his post!
 And now, my lord, the signal?

Doge.

When you hear

The great bell of Saint Mark's, which may not be
 Struck without special order of the Doge
 (The last poor privilege they leave their prince),
 March on Saint Mark's!

I. Ber.

And there?—

Doge.

By different routes

Let your march be directed, every sixty
 Entering a separate avenue, and still
 Upon the way let your cry be of war
 And of the Genoese fleet, by the first dawn,
 Discern'd before the port; form round the palace,
 Within whose court will be drawn out in arms
 My nephew and the clients of our house,
 Many and martial; while the bell tolls on,
 Shout ye, “Saint Mark!—the foe is on our waters!”

Cal. I see it now—but on, my noble lord.

Doge. All the patricians flocking to the Council,
 (Which they dare not refuse, at the dread signal
 Pealing from out their patron saint's proud tower,)

Will then be gather'd in unto their harvest.
 And we will reap them with the sword for sickle.
 If some few should be tardy or absent them,
 'T will be but to be taken faint and single,
 When the majority are put to rest.

Cal. Would that the hour were come! we will not scotch,
 But kill.

Ber. Once more, sir, with your pardon, I
 Would now repeat the question which I ask'd
 Before Bertuccio added to our cause
 The great ally who renders it more sure,
 And therefore safer, and as such admits
 Some dawn of mercy to a portion of
 Our victims—must all perish in this slaughter?

Cal. All who encounter me and mine, be sure,
 The mercy they have shown, I show.

Consp. All! all!
 Is this a time to talk of pity? when
 Have they e'er shown, or felt, or feign'd it?

I. Ber. Bertram,
 This false compassion is a folly, and
 Injustice to thy comrades and thy cause!
 Dost thou not see, that if we single out
 Some for escape, they live but to avenge
 The fallen? and how distinguish now the innocent
 From out the guilty? all their acts are *one*—
 A single emanation from one body,
 Together knit for our oppression! 'T is
 Much that we let their children live; I doubt
 If all of these even should be set apart:
 The hunter may reserve some single cub
 From out the tiger's litter, but who e'er
 Would seek to save the spotted sire or dam,
 Unless to perish by their fangs? however,
 I will abide by Doge Faliero's counsel:
 Let him decide if any should be saved.

Doge. Ask me not—tempt me not with such a question—
 Decide yourselves.

I. Ber. You know their private virtues
 Far better than we can, to whom alone
 Their public vices, and most foul oppression,
 Have made them deadly; if there be amongst them
 One who deserves to be repeal'd, pronounce.

Doge. Dolfino's father was my friend, and Lando
 Fought by my side, and Marc Cornaro shared
 My Genoese embassy : I saved the life
 Of Veniero—shall I save it twice?
 Would that I could save them and Venice also !
 All these men, or their fathers, were my friends
 Till they became my subjects ; then fell from me
 As faithless leaves drop from the o'erblown flower,
 All left me a lone blighted thorny stalk,
 Which, in its solitude, can shelter nothing ;
 So, as they let me wither, let them perish.

Cal. They cannot co-exist with Venice' freedom !

Doge. Ye, though you know and feel our mutual mass
 Of many wrongs, even ye are ignorant
 What fatal poison to the springs of life,
 To human ties, and all that's good and dear,
 Lurks in the present institutes of Venice :
 All these men were my friends : I loved them, they
 Requitd honourably my regards ;
 We served and fought ; we smiled and wept in concert ;
 We revell'd or we sorrow'd side by side ;
 We made alliances of blood and marriage ;
 We grew in years and honours fairly,—till
 Their own desire, not my ambition, made
 Them choose me for their prince, and then farewell !
 Farewell all social memory ! all thoughts
 In common ! and sweet bonds which link old friendships,
 When the survivors of long years and actions,
 Which now belong to history, soothe the days
 Which yet remain by treasuring each other,
 And never meet, but each behold the mirror
 Of half a century on his brother's brow,
 And sees a hundred beings, now in earth,
 Flit round them whispering of the days gone by,
 And seeming not all dead, as long as two
 Of the brave, joyous, reckless, glorious band,
 Which once were one and many, still retain
 A breath to sigh for them, a tongue to speak
 Of deeds that else were silent, save on marble——
 Oime ! Oime !—and must I do this deed ?

I. Ber. My lord, you are much moved : it is not now
 That such things must be dwelt upon.

Doge.

Your patience

A moment—I recede not : mark with me
 The gloomy vices of this government. [me—
 From the hour they made me Doge, the *Doge* THEY made
 Farewell the past ! I died to all that had been,
 Or rather they to me : no friends, no kindness,
 No privacy of life—all were cut off :
 They came not near me, such approach gave umbrage ;
 They could not love me, such was not the law ;
 They thwarted me, 't was the state's policy ;
 They baffled me, 't was a patrician's duty ;
 They wrong'd me, for such was to right the state ;
 They could not right me, that would give suspicion ;
 So that I was a slave to my own subjects ;
 So that I was a foe to my own friends ;
 Begirt with spies for guards, with robes for power,
 With pomp for freedom, gaolers for a council,
 Inquisitors for friends, and hell for life !
 I had one only fount of quiet left,
 And *that* they poison'd. My pure household gods
 Were shiver'd on my hearth, and o'er their shrine
 Sate grinning Ribaldry and sneering Scorn. [be

I. Ber. You have been deeply wrong'd, and now shall
 Nobly avenged before another night.

Doge. I had borne all—it hurt me, but I bore it—
 Till this last running over of the cup
 Of bitterness—until this last loud insult,
 Not only unredress'd, but sanction'd ; then,
 And thus, I cast all further feelings from me—
 The feelings which they crush'd for me, long, long
 Before, even in their oath of false allegiance !
 Even in that very hour and vow, they abjured
 Their friend and made a sovereign, as boys make
 Playthings, to do their pleasure—and be broken !
 I from that hour have seen but senators
 In dark suspicious conflict with the Doge,
 Brooding with him in mutual hate and fear ;
 They dreading he should snatch the tyranny
 From out their grasp, and he abhorring tyrants.
 To me, then, these men have no *private* life,
 Nor claim to ties they have cut off from others ;
 As senators for arbitrary acts
 Amenable, I look on them—as such
 Let them be dealt upon.

Cal.

And' now to action !

Hence, brethren, to our posts, and may this be
The last night of mere words : I'd fain be doing !
Saint Mark's great bell at dawn shall find me wakeful !

I. Ber. Disperse then to your posts : be firm and vigilant ;
Think on the wrongs we bear, the rights we claim.
This day and night shall be the last of peril !
Watch for the signal, and then march. I go
To join my band ; let each be prompt to marshal
His separate charge : the Doge will now return
To the palace to prepare all for the blow.
We part to meet in freedom and in glory !

Cal. Doge, when I greet you next, my homage to you
Shall be the head of Steno on this sword !

Doge. No ; let him be reserved unto the last,
Nor turn aside to strike at such a prey.
Till nobler game is quarried : his offence
Was a mere ebullition of the vice,
The general corruption generated
By the foul aristocracy : he could not—
He dared not in more honourable days
Have risk'd it. I have merged all private wrath
Against him in the thought of our great purpose.
A slave insults me—I require his punishment
From his proud master's hand ; if he refuse it,
The offence grows his, and let him answer it.

Cal. Yet, as the immediate cause of the alliance
Which consecrates our undertaking more,
I owe him such deep gratitude, that fain
I would repay him as he merits ; may I ?

Doge. You would but lop the hand, and I the head ;
You would but smite the scholar, I the master ;
You would but punish Steno, I the senate
I cannot pause on individual hate,
In the absorbing, sweeping, whole revenge,
Which, like the sheeted fire from heaven, must blast
Without distinction, as it fell of yore,
Where the Dead Sea hath quench'd two cities' ashes.

I. Ber. Away, then, to your posts ! I but remain
A moment to accompany the Doge.
To our late place of tryst, to see no spies
Have been upon the scout, and thence I hasten
To where my allotted band is under arms.

Cal. Farewell, then,—until dawn!

I. Ber. Success go with you!

Consp. We will not fail—Away! My lord, farewell!

[*The conspirators salute the DOGE and ISRAEL BERTUCCIO, and retire, headed by PHILIP CALENDARO. The DOGE and ISRAEL BERTUCCIO remain.*]

I. Ber. We have them in the toil—it cannot fail!
Now thou'rt indeed a sovereign, and wilt make
A name immortal greater than the greatest:
Free citizens have struck at kings ere now;
Cæsars have fallen, and even patrician hands
Have crush'd dictators, as the popular steel
Has reach'd patricians: but, until this hour,
What prince has plotted for his people's freedom?
Or risk'd a life to liberate his subjects?
For ever, and for ever, they conspire
Against the people, to abuse their hands
To chains, but laid aside to carry weapons
Against the fellow-nations, so that yoke
On yoke, and slavery and death may whet,
Not glut, the never-gorged Leviathan!
Now, my lord, to our enterprise:—'tis great,
And greater the reward; why stand you rapt?
A moment back, and you were all impatience!

Doge. And is it then decided! must they die?

I. Ber. Who?

Doge. My own friends by blood and courtesy,
And many deeds and days—the senators?

I. Ber. You pass'd their sentence, and it is a just one.

Doge. Ay, so it seems, and so it is to *you*;

You are a patriot, plebeian Gracchus—

The rebels' oracle, the people's tribune—

I blame you not—you act in your vocation:

• They smote you, and oppress'd you, and despised you;

So they have *me*: but *you* ne'er spake with them;

You never broke their bread, nor shared their salt;

You never had their wine-cup at your lips;

You grew not up with them, nor laugh'd, nor wept,

Nor held a revel in their company;

Ne'er smiled to see them smile, nor claim'd their smile

In social interchange for yours, nor trusted,

Nor wore them in your heart of hearts, as I have:

These hairs of mine are grey, and so are theirs,
 The elders of the Council : I remember
 When all our locks were like the raven's wing,
 As we went forth to take our prey around
 The isles wrung from the false Mahometan ;
 And can I see them dabbled o'er with blood ?
 Each stab to them will seem my suicide.

I. Ber. Doge ! Doge ! this vacillation is unworthy
 A child ; if you are not in second childhood,
 Call back your nerves to your own purpose, nor
 Thus shame yourself and me. By heavens ! I'd rather
 Forego even now, or fail in our intent,
 Than see the man I venerate subside
 From high resolves into such shallow weakness !
 You have seen blood in battle, shed it, both
 Your own and that of others : can you shrink then
 From a few drops from veins of hoary vampires,
 Who but give back what they have drain'd from millions ?

Doge. Bear with me ! Step by step, and blow on blow,
 I will divide with you ; think not I waver :
 Ah ! no ; it is the *certainty* of all
 Which I must do doth make me tremble thus,
 But let these last and lingering thoughts have way,
 To which you only and the night are conscious,
 And both regardless : when the hour arrives,
 'Tis mine to sound the knell, and strike the blow,
 Which shall unpeople many palaces,
 And hew the highest genealogic trees
 Down to the earth, strew'd with their bleeding fruit,
 And crush their blossoms into barrenness :
This will I—must I—have I sworn to do,
Nor aught can turn me from my destiny ;
But still I quiver to behold what I
Must be, and think what I have been ! Bear with me.

I. Ber. Re-man your breast ; I feel no such remorse,
 I understand it not : why should you change ?
 You acted, and you act, on your free will.

Doge. Ay, there it is—you feel not, nor do I,
 Else I should stab thee on the spot, to save
 A thousand lives, and killing, do no murder ;
 You feel not—you go to this butcher-work
 As if these high-born men were steers for shambles :
 When all is over, you'll be free and merry,

And calmly wash those hands incarnadine ;
 But I, outgoing thee and all thy fellows
 In this surpassing massacre, shall be,
 Shall see and feel—oh God ! oh God ! 'tis true,
 And thou dost well to answer that it was
 " My own free will and act," and yet you err,
 For I *will* do this ! Doubt not—fear not ; I
 Will be your most unmerciful accomplice !
 And yet I act no more on my free will,
 Nor my own feelings—both compel me back ;
 But there is *hell* within me and around,
 And like the demon who believes and trembles
 Must I abhor and do. Away ! away !
 Get thee unto thy fellows, I will hie me
 To gather the retainers of our house.
 Doubt not, St. Mark's great bell shall wake all Venice,
 Except her slaughter'd senate : ere the sun
 Be broad upon the Adriatic there
 Shall be a voice of weeping, which shall drown
 The roar of waters in the cry of blood !
 I am resolved—come on.

I. Ber. With all my soul !
 Keep a firm rein upon these bursts of passion :
 Remember what these men have dealt to thee,
 And that this sacrifice will be succeeded
 By ages of prosperity and freedom
 To this unshackled city : a true tyrant
 Would have depopulated empires, nor
 Have felt the strange compunction which hath wrung you
 To punish a few traitors to the people.
 Trust me, such were a pity more misplaced
 Than the late mercy of the state to Steno.

Doge. Man, thou hast struck upon the chord which jars
 All nature from my heart. Hence to our task ! [*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*Palazzo of the Patrician LIONI. LIONI laying aside the mask and cloak which the Venetian wore in public, attended by a Domestic.*

Lioni. I will to rest, right weary of this revel,
The gayest we have held for many moons,
And yet, I know not why, it cheer'd me not;
There came a heaviness across my heart,
Which, in the lightest movement of the dance,
Though eye to eye, and hand in hand united
Even with the lady of my love, oppress'd me,
And through my spirit chill'd my blood, until
A damp like death rose o'er my brow; I strove
To laugh the thought away, but 't would not be;
Through all the music ringing in my ears
A knell was sounding as distinct and clear,
Though low and far, as e'er the Adrian wave
Rose o'er the city's murmur in the night,
Dashing against the outward Lido's bulwark:
So that I left the festival before
It reach'd its zenith, and will woo my pillow
For thoughts more tranquil, or forgetfulness.
Antonio, take my mask and cloak, and light
The lamp within my chamber.

Ant. Yes, my lord:
Command you no refreshment?

Lioni. Nought, save sleep,
Which will not be commanded. Let me hope it,
[Exit ANTONIO.]

Though my breast feels too anxious; I will try
Whether the air will calm my spirits: 't is
A goodly night; the cloudy wind which blew
From the Levant hath crept into its cave,
And the broad moon has brighten'd. What a stillness!
[Goes to an open lattice.]

And what a contrast with the scene I left,
Where the tall torches' glare, and silver lamps'
More pallid gleam along the tapestried walls,
Spread over the reluctant gloom which haunts
Those vast and dimly-latticed galleries

A dazzling mass of artificial light,
 Which show'd all things, but nothing as they were.
 There Age, essaying to recall the past,
 After long striving for the hues of youth
 At the sad labour of the toilet, and
 Full many a glance at the too faithful mirror,
 Prank'd forth in all the pride of ornament,
 Forgot itself, and trusting to the falsehood
 Of the indulgent beams, which show, yet hide,
 Believed itself forgotten, and was fool'd.
 There Youth, which needed not nor thought of such
 Vain adjuncts, lavish'd its true bloom, and health,
 And bridal beauty, in the unwholesome press
 Of flush'd and crowded wassailers, and wasted
 Its hours of rest in dreaming this was pleasure ;
 And so shall waste them till the sunrise streams
 On sallow cheeks and sunken eyes, which should not
 Have worn this aspect yet for many a year.
 The music, and the banquet, and the wine,
 The garlands, the rose odours, and the flowers,
 The sparkling eyes, and flashing ornaments,
 The white arms and the raven hair, the braids
 And bracelets ; swanlike bosoms, and the necklace,
 An India in itself, yet dazzling not
 The eye like what it circled ; the thin robes,
 Floating like light clouds 'twixt our gaze and heaven ;
 The many twinkling feet so small and sylphlike,
 Suggesting the more secret symmetry
 Of the fair forms which terminate so well—
 All the delusion of the dizzy scene,
 Its false and true enchantments—art and nature,
 Which swam before my giddy eyes, that drank
 The sight of beauty as the parched pilgrim's
 On Arab sands the false mirage, which offers
 A lucid lake to his eluded thirst,
 • Are gone. Around me are the stars and waters—
 Worlds mirror'd in the ocean, goodlier sight
 Than torches glared back by a gaudy glass ;
 And the great element, which is to space
 What ocean is to earth, spreads its blue depths,
 Soften'd with the first breathings of the spring ;
 The high moon sails upon her beautiful way,
 Serenely smoothing o'er the lofty walls

Of those tall piles and sea-girt palaces,
 Whose porphyry pillars, and whose costly fronts,
 Fraught with the orient spoil of many marbles,
 Like altars ranged along the broad canal,
 Seem each a trophy of some mighty deed
 Rear'd up from out the waters, scarce less strangely
 Than those more massy and mysterious giants
 Of architecture, those Titanian fabrics,
 Which point in Egypt's plains to times that have
 No other record. All is gentle : nought
 Stirs rudely ; but, congenial with the night,
 Whatever walks is gliding like a spirit.
 The tinklings of some vigilant guitars
 Of sleepless lovers to a wakeful mistress,
 And cautious opening of the casement, showing
 That he is not unheard ; while her young hand,
 Fair as the moonlight of which it seems part,
 So delicately white, it trembles in
 The act of opening the forbidden lattice,
 To let in love through music, makes his heart
 Thrill like his lyre-strings at the sight ; the dash
 Phosphoric of the oar, or rapid twinkle
 Of the far lights of skimming gondolas,
 And the responsive voices of the choir
 Of boatmen answering back with verse for verse ;
 Some dusky shadow checkering the Rialto ;
 Some glimmering palace roof, or tapering spire,
 Are all the sights and sounds which here pervade
 The ocean-born and earth-commanding city—
 How sweet and soothing is this hour of calm !
 I thank thee, Night ! for thou hast chased away
 Those horrid bodements which, amidst the throng,
 I could not dissipate : and with the blessing
 Of thy benign and quiet influence,
 Now will I to my couch, although to rest
 Is almost wronging such a night as this.—
 [A knockin., is heard from without.
 Hark ! what is that ? or who at such a moment ?

Enter ANTONIO.

Ant. My lord, a man without, on urgent business,
 Implores to be admitted.

Lioni.

Is he a stranger ?

Ant. His face is muffled in his cloak, but both
His voice and gestures seem familiar to me.
I craved his name, but this he seem'd reluctant
To trust, save to yourself: most earnestly
He sues to be admitted to approach you.

Lioni. 'Tis a strange hour, and a suspicious bearing!
And yet there is slight peril: 'tis not in
Their houses noble men are struck at; still,
Although I know not that I have a foe
In Venice, 't will be wise to use some caution.
Admit him, and retire; but call up quickly
Some of thy fellows, who may wait without.—
Who can this man be?

[*Exit ANTONIO, and returns with BERTRAM muffled.*]

Ber. My good lord Lioni,
I have no time to lose, nor thou,—dismiss
This menial hence; I would be private with you.

Lioni. It seems the voice of Bertram—Go, Antonio.

Exit ANTONIO.

Now, stranger, what would you at such an hour?

Ber. (discovering himself). A boon, my noble patron;
you have granted
Many to your poor client, Bertram; add
This one, and make him happy.

Lioni. Thou hast known me
From boyhood, ever ready to assist thee
In all fair objects of advancement, which
Beseem one of thy station; I would promise
Ere thy request was heard, but that the hour,
Thy bearing, and this strange and hurried mode
Of suing, gives me to suspect this visit
Hath some mysterious import—but say on—
What has occur'd, some rash and sudden broil?—
A cup too much, a scuffle, and a stab?—
Mere things of every day; so that thou hast not
Spilt noble blood, I guarantee thy safety:
But then thou must withdraw, for angry friends
And relatives, in the first burst of vengeance,
Are things in Venice deadlier than the laws.

Ber. My lord, I thank you; but—

Lioni. But what? You have not
Raised a rash hand against one of our order?
If so, withdraw and fly, and own it not;

I would not slay—but then I must not save thee !
He who has shed patrician blood——

Ber.

I come

To save patrician blood, and not to shed it !
And thereunto I must be speedy, for
Each minute lost may lose a life ; since Time
Has changed his slow scythe for the two-edged sword,
And is about to take, instead of sand,
The dust from sepulchres to fill his hour-glass !—
Go not *thou* forth to-morrow !

Lioni.

Wherefore not ?

What means this menace ?

Ber.

Do not seek its meaning,

But do as I implore thee ;—stir not forth,
Whate'er be stirring : though the roar of crowds—
The cry of women, and the shrieks of babes—
The groans of men—the clash of arms—the sound
Of rolling drum, shrill trumpet, and hollow bell,
Peal in one wide alarm !—Go not forth,
Until the tocsin's silent, nor even then
Till I return !

Lioni.

Again, what does this mean ?

Ber. Again, I tell thee, ask not ; but by all
Thou holdest dear on earth or heaven—by all
The souls of thy great fathers, and thy hope
To emulate them, and to leave behind
Descendants worthy both of them and thee—
By all thou hast of bless'd in hope or memory—
By all thou hast to fear here or hereafter—
By all the good deeds thou hast done to me,
Good I would now repay with greater good,
Remain within—trust to thy household gods
And to my word for safety, if thou dost
As I now counsel—but if not, thou art lost !

Lioni. I am indeed already lost in wonder ;
Surely thou ravest ! what have *I* to dread ?
Who are my foes ? or if there be such, *why*
Art *thou* leagued with them ? *thou* ! or if so leagued,
Why comest thou to tell me at this hour,
And not before ?

Ber.

I cannot answer this.

Wilt thou go forth despite of this true warning ?

Lioni. I was not born to shrink from idle threats,

The cause of which I know not : at the hour
Of council, be it soon or late, I shall not
Be found among the absent.

Ber. Say not so !

Once more, art thou determined to go forth ?

Lioni. I am. Nor is there aught which shall impede me !

Ber. Then, Heaven have mercy on thy soul !—Farewell !
[*Going.*]

Lioni. Stay—there is more in this than my own safety
Which makes me call thee back ; we must not part thus :
Bertram, I have known thee long.

Ber. From childhood, signor,
You have been my protector : in the days
Of reckless infancy, when rank forgets,
Or, rather, is not yet taught to remember,
Its cold prerogative, we play'd together ;
Our sports, our smiles, our tears, were mingled oft ;
My father was your father's client, I
His son's scarce less than foster-brother ; years
Saw us together—happy, heart-full hours !
Oh God ! the difference 'twixt those hours and this !

Lioni. Bertram, 't is thou who hast forgotten them.

Ber. Nor now, nor ever ; whatsoe'er betide,
I would have saved you : when to manhood's growth
We sprung, and you, devoted to the state,
As suits your station, the more humble Bertram
Was left unto the labours of the humble,
Still you forsook me not ; and if my fortunes
Have not been towering, 't was no fault of him
Who oft-times rescued and supported me,
When struggling with the tides of circumstance,
Which bear away the weaker : noble blood
Ne'er mantled in a nobler heart than thine
Has proved to me, the poor plebeian Bertram.
Would that thy fellow-senators were like thee !

Lioni. Why, what hast thou to say against the senate ?

Ber. Nothing.

Lioni. I know that there are angry spirits
And turbulent mutterers of stifled treason,
Who lurk in narrow places, and walk out
Muffled to whisper curses to the night ;
Disbanded soldiers, discontented ruffians,
And desperate libertines who brawl in taverns ;

Thou herdest not with such : 't is true, of late
 I have lost sight of thee, but thou wert wont
 To lead a temperate life, and break thy bread
 With honest mates, and bear a cheerful aspect.
 What hath come to thee? in thy hollow eye
 And hueless cheek, and thine unquiet motions,
 Sorrow and shame and conscience seem at war
 To waste thee.

Ber. Rather shame and sorrow light
 On the accursed tyranny which rides
 The very air in Venice, and makes men
 Madden as in the last hours of the plague
 Which sweeps the soul deliriously from life ! [Bertram ;

Lioni. Some villains have been tampering with thee,
 This is not thy old language, nor own thoughts ;
 Some wretch has made thee drunk with disaffection :
 But thou must not be lost so ; thou *wert* good
 And kind, and art not fit for such base acts
 As vice and villainy would put thee to :
 Confess—confide in me—thou know'st my nature.
 What is it thou and thine are bound to do,
 Which should prevent thy friend, the only son
 Of him who was a friend unto thy father,
 So that our good-will is a heritage
 We should bequeath to our posterity
 Such as ourselves received it. or augmented ;
 I say, what is it thou must do, that I
 Should deem thee dangerous, and keep the house
 Like a sick girl?

Ber. Nay, question me no further :
 I must be gone.—

Lioni. And I be murder'd !—say,
 Was it not thus thou said'st, my gentle Bertram?

Ber. Who talks of murder? what said I of murder?
 'T is false ! I did not utter such a word.*

Lioni. Thou didst not ; but from out thy wolfish eye,
 So changed from what I knew it, there glares forth
 The gladiator. If *my* life's thine object,
 Take it—I am unarm'd,—and then away !
 I would not hold my breath on such a tenure
 As the capricious mercy of such things
 As thou and those who have set thee to thy task-work.

Ber. Sooner than spill thy blood, I peril mine ;

Sooner than harm a hair of thine, I place
In jeopardy a thousand heads, and some
As noble, nay, even nobler than thine own.

Lioni. Ay, is it even so? Excuse me, Bertram;
I am not worthy to be singled out
From such exalted hecatombs—who are they
That *are* in danger, and that *make* the danger?

Ber. Venice, and all that she inherits, are
Divided like a house against itself,
And so will perish ere to-morrow's twilight!

Lioni. More mysteries, and awful ones! But now,
Or thou, or I, or both, it may be, are
Upon the verge of ruin; speak once out,
And thou art safe and glorious; for 't is more
Glorious to save than slay, and slay i' the dark too—
Fie, Bertram! that was not a craft for thee!
How would it look to see upon a spear
The head of him whose heart was open to thee,
Borne by thy hand before the shuddering people?
And such may be my doom; for hear I swear
Whate'er the peril or the penalty
Of thy denunciation, I go forth,
Unless thou dost detail the cause, and show
The consequence of all which led thee here!

Ber. Is there no way to save thee? minutes fly,
And thou art lost—*thou*!—my sole benefactor,
The only being who was constant to me
Through every change. Yet, make me not a traitor!
Let me save thee—but spare my honour!

Lioni. Where
Can lie the honour in a league of murder?
And who are traitors save unto the state?

Ber. A league is still a compact, and more binding
In honest hearts when words must stand for law;
And in my mind, there is no traitor like
He whose domestic treason plants the poniard
Within the breast which trusted to his truth.

Lioni. And *who* will strike the steel to mine?

Ber. Not I;
I could have wound my soul up to all things
Save this. *Thou* must not die! and think how dear
Thy life is, when I risk so many lives,
Nay, more, the life of lives, the liberty

Of future generations, *not* to be
 The assassin thou miscall'st me :—once, once more
 I do adjure thee, pass not o'er thy threshold !

Lioni. It is in vain—this moment I go forth

Ber. Then perish Venice rather than my friend !
 I will disclose—ensnare—betray—destroy—
 Oh, what a villain I become for thee !

Lioni. Say, rather, thy friend's saviour and the state's !
 Speak—pause not—all rewards, all pledges for
 Thy safety and thy welfare ; wealth such as
 The state accords her worthiest servants ; nay
 Nobility itself I guarantee thee,
 So that thou art sincere and penitent.

Ber. I have thought again : it must not be—I love thee—
 Thou know'st it—that I stand here is the proof,
 Not least though last ; but having done my duty
 By thee, I now must do it by my country !
 Farewell—we meet no more in life !—farewell !

Lioni. What, ho !—Antonio—Pedro—to the door
 See that none pass—arrest this man !—

Enter ANTONIO and other armed Domestics, who seize
BERTRAM.

Lioni (continues). Take care
 He hath no harm ; bring me my sword and cloak,
 And man the gondola with four oars—quick—

[*Exit ANTONIO.*]

We will unto Giovanni Gradenigo's,
 And send for Marc Cornaro :—fear not, Bertram ;
 This needful violence is for thy safety,
 No less than for the general weal.

Ber. Where wouldst thou
 Bear me a prisoner ?

Lioni. Firstly to “the Ten ;”
 Next to the Doge.

Ber. To the Doge ?

Lioni. Assuredly.
 Is he not chief of the state ?

Ber. Perhaps at sunrise—

Lioni. What mean you ?—but we'll know anon.

Ber. Art sure ?

Lioni. Sure as all gentle means can make ; and if
 They fail, you know “the Ten” and their tribunal,

And that Saint Mark's has dungeons, and the dungeons
A rack.

Ber. Apply it then before the dawn
Now hastening into heaven—One more such word,
And you shall perish piecemeal, by the death
You think to doom to me.

Re-enter ANTONIO.

Ant. The bark is ready,
My lord, and all prepared.

Lioni. Look to the prisoner.
Bertram, I'll reason with thee as we go
To the Magnifico's, sage Gradenigo. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

The Ducal Palace.—The Doge's Apartment.

The DOGE and his Nephew BERTUCCIO FALLIERO.

Doge. Are all the people of our house in muster?

Ber. F. They are array'd, and eager for the signal,
Within our palace precincts at San Polo.
I come for your last orders.

Doge. It had been
As well had there been time to have got together,
From my own fief, Val di Marino, more
Of our retainers—but it is too late.

Ber. F. Methinks, my lord, 't is better as it is:
A sudden swelling of our retinue
Had waked suspicion; and, though fierce and trusty,
The vassals of that district are too rude
And quick in quarrel to have long maintain'd
The secret discipline we need for such
A service, till our foes are dealt upon.

Doge. True; but when once the signal has been given,
These are the men for such an enterprise;
These city slaves have all their private bias,
Their prejudice *against* or *for* this noble,
Which may induce them to o'erdo or spare
Where mercy may be madness; the fierce peasants,
Serfs of my county of Val di Marino,
Would do the bidding of their lord without
Distinguishing for love or hate his foes;

Alike to them Marcello or Cornaro,
A Gradenigo or a Foscari ;
They are not used to start at those vain names,
Nor bow the knee before a civic senate ;
A chief in armour is their Suzerain,
And not a thing in robes.

Ber. F. We are enough ;
And for the dispositions of our clients
Against the senate I will answer.

Doge. Well,
The die is thrown ; but for a warlike service,
Done in the field, commend me to my peasants :
They made the sun shine through the host of Huns
When sallow burghers slunk back to their tents,
And cower'd to hear their own victorious trumpet.
If there be small resistance you will find
These citizens all lions, like their standard ;
But if there's much to do, you'll wish, with me,
A band of iron rustics at our backs.

Ber. F. Thus thinking, I must marvel you resolve
To strike the blow so suddenly.

Doge. Such blows
Must be struck suddenly or never. When
I had o'ermaster'd the weak false remorse
Which yearn'd about my heart, too fondly yielding
A moment to the feelings of old days,
I was most fain to strike ; and, firstly, that
I might not yield again to such emotions ;
And, secondly, because of all these men,
Save Israel and Philip Calendaro,
I know not well the courage or the faith :
To-day might find 'mongst them a traitor to us,
As yesterday a thousand to the senate ;
But once in, with their hilts hot in their hands,
They must *on* for their own sakes : one stroke struck,
And the mere instinct of the first-born Cain,
Which ever lurks somewhere in human hearts,
Though circumstance may keep it in abeyance,
Will urge the rest on like to wolves ; the sight
Of blood to crowds begets the thirst of more,
As the first wine-cup leads to the long revel ;
And you will find a harder task to quell
Than urge them when they *have* commenced, but *till*

That moment, a mere voice, a straw, a shadow,
Are capable of turning them aside.—
How goes the night?

Ber. F. Almost upon the dawn.

Doge. Then it is time to strike upon the bell.
Are the men posted?

Ber. F. By this time they are ;
But they have orders not to strike, until
They have command from you through me in person.

Doge. 'T is well.—Will the morn never put to rest
These stars which twinkle yet o'er all the heavens?
I am settled and bound up, and being so,
The very effort which it cost me to
Resolve to cleanse this commonwealth with fire,
Now leaves my mind more steady. I have wept
And trembled at the thought of this dread duty ;
But now I have put down all idle passion,
And look the growing tempest in the face,
As doth the pilot of an admiral galley :
Yet (wouldst thou think it, kinsman ? it hath been
A greater struggle to me, than when nations
Beheld their fate merged in the approaching fight,
Where I was leader of a phalanx, where
Thousands were sure to perish—Yes, to spill
The rank polluted current from the veins
Of a few bloated despots needed more
To steel me to a purpose such as made
Timoleon immortal, than to face
The toils and dangers of a life of war.

Ber. F. It gladdens me to see your former wisdom
Subdue the furies which so wrong you ere
You were decided.

Doge. It was ever thus
With me ; the hour of agitation came
In the first glimmerings of a purpose, when
Passion had too much room to sway ; but in
The hour of action I had stood as calm
As were the dead who lay around me : this
They knew who made me what I am, and trusted
To the subduing power which I preserved
Over my mood, when its first burst was spent.
But they were not aware that there are things
Which make revenge a virtue by reflection,

And not an impulse of mere anger; though
 The laws sleep, justice wakes, and injured souls
 Oft do a public right with private wrong,
 And justify their deeds unto themselves.—
 Methinks the day breaks—is it not so? look,
 Thine eyes are clear with youth;—the air puts on
 A morning freshness, and, at least to me,
 The sea looks greyer through the lattice.

Ber. F.

True,

The morn is dappling in the sky.

Doge.

Away then!

See that they strike without delay, and with
 The first toll of Saint Mark's, march on the palace
 With all our house's strength; there I will meet you;
 The Sixteen and their companies will move
 In separate columns at the self-same moment:
 Be sure you post yourself at the great gate:
 I would not trust "The Ten" except to us—
 The rest, the rabble of patricians, may
 Glut the more careless swords of those leagued with us.
 Remember that the cry is still "Saint Mark!
 The Genoese are come—ho! to the rescue!
 Saint Mark and Liberty!"—Now—now to action!

Ber. F. Farewell then, noble uncle! we will meet
 In freedom and true sovereignty, or never!

Doge. Come hither, my Bertuccio—one embrace;
 Speed, for the day grows broader; send me soon
 A messenger to tell me how all goes
 When you rejoin our troops, and then sound—sound
 The storm-bell from Saint Mark's!

[*Exit BERTUCCIO FALIERO.*

Doge (solus).

He is gone,

And on each footstep moves a life. 'Tis done.
 Now the destroying angel hovers o'er
 Venice, and pauses ere he pours the vial,
 Even as the eagle overlooks his prey.
 And for a moment, poised in middle air,
 Suspends the motion of his mighty wings,
 Then swoops with his unerring beak. To-day!
 That slowly walk'st the waters! march—march on—
 I would not smite i' the dark, but rather see
 That no stroke errs. And you, ye blue sea waves!
 I have seen you dyed ere now, and deeply too,

With Genoese, Saracen, and Hunnish gore,
 While that of Venice flow'd too, but victorious,
 Now thou must wear an unmix'd crimson ; no
 Barbaric blood can reconcile us now
 Unto that horrible incarnadine,
 But friend or foe will roll in civic slaughter.
 And have I lived to fourscore years for this ?
 I, who was named Preserver of the City ?
 I, at whose name the million's caps were flung
 Into the air, and cries from tens of thousands
 Rose up, imploring Heaven to send me blessings,
 And fame, and length of days—to see this day ?
 But this day, black within the calendar,
 Shall be succeeded by a bright millennium.
 Doge Dandolo survived to ninety summers
 To vanquish empires, and refuse their crown ;
 I will resign the crown, and make the state
 Renew its freedom— but oh ! by what means ?
 The noble end must justify them. What
 Are a few drops of human blood ? 't is false,
 The blood of tyrants is not human : they,
 Like to incarnate Molochs, feed on ours,
 Until 't is time to give them to the tombs
 Which they have made so populous.—Oh world !
 Oh men ! what are ye, and our best designs,
 That we must work by crime to punish crime ?
 And slay as if Death had but this one gate,
 When a few years would make the sword superfluous ?
 And I, upon the verge of th' unknown realm,
 Yet send so many heralds on before me ?—
 I must not ponder this. [*A pause.*]

Hark ! was there not

A murmur as of distant voices, and
 A tramp of feet in martial unison ?
 What phantoms even of sound our wishes raise !
 • It cannot be—the signal hath not rung—
 Why pauses it ? My nephew's messenger
 Should be upon his way to me, and he
 Himself perhaps even now draws grating back
 Upon its ponderous hinge the steep tower portal,
 Where swings the sullen huge oracular bell,
 Which never knells but for a princely death,
 Or for a state in peril, pealing forth

Tremendous bodements ; let it do its office,
 And be this peal its awfulest and last
 Sound till the strong tower rock !—What ! silent still ?
 I would go forth, but that my post is here
 To be the centre of re-union to
 The oft discordant elements which form
 Leagues of this nature, and to keep compact
 The wavering of the weak, in case of conflict ;
 For if they should do battle, 't will be here,
 Within the palace, that the strife will thicken :
 Then here must be my station, as becomes
 The master-mover.—Hark ! he comes—he comes,
 My nephew, brave Bertuccio's messenger.—
 What tidings ? Is he marching ? hath he sped ?
 They here !—all 's lost—yet will I make an effort.

Enter a SIGNOR OF THE NIGHT, with Guards, &c. &c.

Sig. Doge, I arrest thee of high treason !

Doge.

Me !

Thy prince, of treason ?—Who are they that dare
 Cloak their own treason under such an order ?

Sig. (showing his order). Behold my order from the
 assembled Ten.

Doge. And *where* are they, and *why* assembled ? no
 Such council can be lawful, till the prince
 Preside there, and that duty 's mine : on thine
 I charge thee, give me way, or marshal me
 To the council chamber.

Sig.

Duke ! it may not be :

Nor are they in the wonted Hall of Council,
 But sitting in the convent of Saint Saviour's.

Doge. You dare to disobey me, then ?

Sig.

I serve

The state, and needs must serve it faithfully ;
 My warrant is the will of those who rule it.

Doge. And till that warrant has my signature
 It is illegal, and, as *now* applied,
 Rebellious. Hast thou weigh'd well thy life's worth,
 That thus you dare assume a lawless function ?

Sig. 'T is not my office to reply, but act—
 I am placed here as guard upon thy person,
 And not as judge to hear or to decide.

Doge (aside). I must gain time. So that the storm-bell sound,
 All may be well yet.—Kinsman, speed—speed—speed!—
 Our fate is trembling in the balance, and
 Woe to the vanquish'd! be they prince and people,
 Or slaves and senate—

[*The great bell of Saint Mark's tolls.*
 Lo! it sounds—it tolls!

(*Aloud*). Hark, Signor of the Night! and you, ye hirelings,
 Who wield your mercenary staves in fear,
 It is your knell—Swell on, thou lusty peal!
 Now, knaves, what ransom for your lives?

Sig. Confusion!
 Stand to your arms, and guard the door—all's lost
 Unless that fearful bell be silenced soon.
 The officer hath miss'd his path or purpose,
 Or met some unforeseen and hideous obstacle.
 Anselmo, with thy company proceed
 Straight to the tower; the rest remain with me.

[*Exit part of the Guard.*

Doge. Wretch! if thou wouldst have thy vile life, implore
 It is not now a lease of sixty seconds. [it;
 Ay, send thy miserable ruffians forth;
 They never shall return.

Sig. So let it be!
 They die then in their duty, as will I.

Doge. Fool! the high eagle flies at nobler game
 Than thou and thy base myrmidons,—live on,
 So thou provok'st not peril by resistance,
 And learn (if souls so much obscured can bear
 To gaze upon the sunbeams) to be free.

Sig. And learn thou to be captive. It hath ceased.

[*The bell ceases to toll.*

The traitorous signal, which was to have set
 The bloodhound mob on their patrician prey—
 The knell hath rung, but it is not the senate's!

Doge (after a pause). All's silent, and all's lost!

Sig. Now, Doge, denounce me
 As rebel slave of a revolted council!
 Have I not done my duty?

Doge. Peace, thou thing!
 Thou hast done a worthy deed, and earn'd the price
 Of blood, and they who use thee will reward thee.

But thou wert sent to watch, and not to prate,
As thou said'st even now—then do thine office,
But let it be in silence, as behoves thee,
Since, though thy prisoner, I am thy prince.

Sig. I did not mean to fail in the respect
Due to your rank : in this I shall obey you.

Doge (aside). There now is nothing left me save to die ;
And yet how near success ! I would have fallen,
And proudly, in the hour of triumph, but
To miss it thus !——

*Enter other SIGNORS OF THE NIGHT, with BERTUCCIO
FALIFRO prisoner.*

2nd Sig. We took him in the act
Of issuing from the tower, where, at his order,
As delegated from the Doge, the signal
Had thus begun to sound.

1st Sig. Are all the passes
Which lead up to the palace well secured ?

2nd Sig. They are—besides, it matters not ; the chiefs
Are all in chains, and some even now on trial—
Their followers are dispersed, and many taken.

Ber. F. Uncle !

Doge. It is in vain to war with Fortune ;
The glory hath departed from our house. [sooner !

Ber. F. Who would have deem'd it ?—Ah ! one moment

Doge. That moment would have changed the face of
This gives us to eternity—We'll meet it [ages ;

As men whose triumph is not in success,
But who can make their own minds all in all,
Equal to every fortune. Droop not, 't is
But a brief passage—I would go alone,
Yet if they send us, as 't is like, together,
Let us go worthy of our sires and selves.,

Ber. F. I shall not shame you, uncle.

1st Sig. Lords, our orders
Are to keep guard on both in separate chambers,
Until the council call ye to your trial.

Doge. Our trial ! will they keep their mockery up
Even to the last ? but let them deal upon us,
As we had dealt on them, but with less pomp.
'T is but a game of mutual homicides,

Who have cast lots for the first death, and they
Have won with false dice.—Who hath been our Judas?

1st. Sig. I am not warranted to answer that.

Ber. F. I'll answer for thee—'t is a certain Bertram,
Even now deposing to the secret giunta.

Doge. Bertram, the Bergamask! With what vile tools
We operate to slay or save! This creature,
Black with a double treason, now will earn
Rewards and honours, and be stamp'd in story
With the geese in the Capitol, which gabbled
Till Rome awoke, and had an annual triumph,
While Manlius, who hurl'd down the Gauls, was cast
From the Tarpeian.

1st. Sig. He aspired to treason,
And sought to rule the state.

Doge. He saved the state,
And sought but to reform what he revived—
But this is idle——Come, sirs, do your work.

1st. Sig. Noble Bertuccio, we must now remove you
Into an inner chamber.

Ber. F. Farewell, uncle!
If we shall meet again in life I know not,
But they perhaps will let our ashes mingle.

Doge. Yes, and our spirits, which shall yet go forth,
And do what our frail clay, thus clogg'd, hath fail'd in!
They cannot quench the memory of those
Who would have hurl'd them from their guilty thrones,
And such examples will find heirs, though distant.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*The Hall of the Council of Ten, assembled with
the additional Senators, who, on the Trials of the Con-
spirators for the Treason of MARINO FALIERO, composed
what was called the Giunta.—Guards, Officers, &c.
&c.—ISRAEL BERTUCCIO and PHILIP CALENDARO as
Prisoners.—BERTRAM, LJONI, and Witnesses, &c.*

The Chief of the Ten, BENINTENDE.

Ben. There now rests, after such conviction of
Their manifold and manifest offences,
But to pronounce on these obdurate men

The sentence of the law :—a grievous task
 To those who hear, and those who speak. Alas !
 That it should fall to me ! and that my days
 Of office should be stigmatised through all
 The years of coming time, as bearing record
 To this most foul and complicated treason
 Against a just and free state, known to all
 The earth as being the Christian bulwark 'gainst
 The Saracen and the schismatic Greek,
 The savage Hun, and not less barbarous Frank ;
 A city which has open'd India's wealth
 To Europe ; the last Roman refuge from
 O'erwhelming Attila ; the ocean's queen ;
 Proud Genoa's prouder rival ! 'Tis to sap
 The throne of such a city, these lost men
 Have risk'd and forfeited their worthless lives—
 So let them die the death.

I. Ber. We are prepared ;
 Your racks have done that for us. Let us die.

Ben. If ye have that to say which would obtain
 Abatement of your punishment, the Giunta
 Will hear you ; if you have aught to confess,
 Now is your time, perhaps it may avail ye.

I. Ber. We stand to hear, and not to speak.

Ben. Your crimes
 Are fully proved by your accomplices,
 And all which circumstance can add to aid them ;
 Yet we would hear from your own lips complete
 Avowal of your treason ; on the verge
 Of that dread gulf which none repass, the truth
 Alone can profit you on earth or heaven—
 Say, then, what was your motive ?

I. Ber. Justice !

Ben. What
 Your object ?

I. Ber. Freedom !

Ben. You are brief, sir.

I. Ber. So my life grows : I
 Was bred a soldier, not a senator.

Ben. Perhaps you think by this blunt brevity
 To brave your judges to postpone the sentence ?

I. Ber. Do you be brief as I am, and believe me,
 I shall prefer that mercy to your pardon.

Ben. Is this your sole reply to the tribunal?

I. Ber. Go, ask your racks what they have wrung from us,
Or place us there again; we have still some blood left,
And some slight sense of pain in these wrench'd limbs:
But this ye dare not do; for if we die there—
And you have left us little life to spend
Upon your engines, gorged with pangs already—
Ye lose the public spectacle, with which
You would appal your slaves to further slavery!
Groans are not words, nor agony assent,
Nor affirmation truth, if nature's sense
Should overcome the soul into a lie,
For a short respite—must we bear or die?

Ben. Say, who were your accomplices?

I. Ber.

The Senate.

Ben. What do you mean?

I. Ber. Ask of the suffering people,
Whom your patrician crimes have driven to crime.

Ben. You know the Doge?

I. Ber. I served with him at Zara
In the field, when *you* were pleading here your way
To present office; we exposed our lives,
While you but hazarded the lives of others,
Alike by accusation or defence;
And for the rest, all Venice knows her Doge,
Through his great actions, and the Senate's insults.

Ben. You have held conference with him?

I. Ber. I am weary—
Even wearier of your questions than your tortures:
I pray you pass to judgment.

Ben. It is coming.
And you, too, Philip Calendaro, what
Have you to say why you should not be doom'd?

Cal. I never was a man of many words,
• And now have few left worth the utterance.

Ben. A further application of yon engine
May change your tone.

Cal. Most true, it *will* do so;
A former application did so; but
It will not change my words, or if it did—

Ben. What then?

Cal. Will my avowal on yon rack
Stand good in law?

Ben.

Assuredly.

Cal.

Whoe'er

The culprit be whom I accuse of treason?

Ben. Without doubt, he will be brought up to trial.*Cal.* And on this testimony would he perish?*Ben.* So your confession be detail'd and full,
He will stand here in peril of his life.*Cal.* Then look well to thy proud self, President!

For by the eternity which yawns before me

I swear that *thou*, and only thou, shalt be

The traitor I denounce upon that rack,

If I be stretch'd there for the second time.

One of the Giunta. Lord President, 't were best to
proceed to judgment;

There is no more to be drawn from these men.

Ben. Unhappy men! prepare for instant death.

The nature of your crime, our law, and peril

The state now stands in, leave not an hour's respite.

Guards! lead them forth, and upon the balcony

Of the red columns, where, on festal Thursday,

The Doge stands to behold the chase of bulls,

Let them be justified: and leave exposed

Their wavering relics, in the place of judgment,

To the full view of the assembled people!

And Heaven have mercy on their souls!

The Giunta.

Amen!

I. Ber. Signors, farewell! we shall not all again
Meet in one place.*Ben.*

And lest they should essay

To stir up the distracted multitude—

Guards! let their mouths be gagg'd even in the act

Of execution. Lead them hence!

Cal.

What! must we

Not even say farewell to some fond friend,

Nor leave a last word with our confessor?

Ben. A priest is waiting in the antechamber;

But, for your friends, such interviews would be

Painful to them, and useless all to you.

Cal. I knew that we were gagg'd in life; at least

All those who had not heart to risk their lives

Upon their open thoughts; but still I deem'd

That in the last few moments, the same idle

Freedom of speech accorded to the dying,
Would not now be denied to us ; but since——

I. Ber. Even let them have their way, brave Calendaro !
What matter a few syllables ? let's die
Without the slightest show of favour from them ;
So shall our blood more readily arise
To Heaven against them, and more testify
To their atrocities, than could a volume
Spoken or written of our dying words !
They tremble at our voices—nay, they dread
Our very silence—let them live in fear !
Leave them unto their thoughts, and let us now
Address our own above !—Lead on ; we are ready.

Cal. Israel, hadst thou but hearken'd unto me
It had not now been thus ; and yon pale villain,
The coward Bertram, would——

I. Ber. Peace, Calendaro !
What brooks it now to ponder upon this ?

Bert. Alas ! I fain you died in peace with me :
I did not seek this task ; 't was forced upon me :
Say, you forgive me, though I never can
Retrieve my own forgiveness—frown not thus !

I. Ber. I die and pardon thee !

Cal. (*spitting at him*). I die and scorn thee !

[*Exeunt* ISRAEL, BERTUCCIO and PHILIP CALENDARO,
Guards, &c.

Ben. Now that these criminals have been disposed of,
'T is time that we proceed to pass our sentence
Upon the greatest traitor upon record
In any annals, the Doge Faliero !
The proofs and process are complete ; the time
And crime require a quick procedure : shall
He now be call'd in to receive the award ?

The Giunta. Ay, ay.

Ben. Avogadori, order that the Doge
Be brought before the council.

One of the Giunta. And the rest,
When shall they be brought up ?

Ben. When all the chiefs
Have been disposed of. Some have fled to Chiozza ;
But there are thousands in pursuit of them,
And such precaution ta'en on terra firma,

As well as in the islands, that we hope
None will escape to utter in strange lands
His libellous tale of treasons 'gainst the senate.

Enter the DOGE as Prisoner, with Guards, &c. &c.

Ben. Doge—for such still you are, and by the law
Must be consider'd, till the hour shall come
When you must doff the ducal bonnet from
That head, which could not wear a crown more noble
Than empires can confer, in quiet honour,
But it must plot to overthrow your peers,
Who made you what you are, and quench in blood
A city's glory—we have laid already
Before you in your chamber at full length,
By the Avogadori, all the proofs
Which have appar'd against you ; and more ample
Ne'er rear'd their sanguinary shadows to
Confront a traitor. What have you to say
In your defence?

Doge. What shall I say to ye,
Since my defence must be your condemnation?
You are at once offenders and accusers,
Judges and executioners !—Proceed
Upon your power.

Ben. Your chief accomplices
Having confess'd, there is no hope for you.

Doge. And who be they?

Ben. In number many ; but
The first now stands before you and the court,
Bertram, of Bergamo,—would you question him?

Doge (looking at him contemptuously). No.

Ben. And two others, Israel Bertuccio
And Philip Calendaro, have admitted
Their fellowship in treason with the Doge?

Doge. And where are they?

Ben. Gone to their place, and now
Answering to Heaven for what they did on earth.

Doge. Ah ! the plebeian Brutus, is he gone?
And the quick Cassius of the arsenal?—
How did they meet their doom?

Ben. Think of your own :
It is approaching. You decline to plead, then?

Doge. I cannot plead to my inferiors, nor
Can recognise your legal power to try me.
Show me the law!

Ben. On great emergencies
The law must be remodell'd or amended;
Our fathers had not fix'd the punishment
Of such a crime, as on the old Roman tables
The sentence against parricide was left
In pure forgetfulness; they could not render
That penal, which had neither name nor thought
In their great bosoms; who would have foreseen
That nature could be filed to such a crime
As sons 'gainst sire, and princes 'gainst their realms?
Your sin hath made us make a law which will
Become a precedent 'gainst such haught traitors,
As wou'd with treason mount to tyranny;
Not even contented with a sceptre, till
They can convert it to a two-edged sword!
Was not the place of Doge sufficient for ye?
What's nobler than the signory of Venice?

Doge. The signory of Venice! You betray'd me—
You—you, who sit there, traitors as ye are!
From my equality with you in birth,
And my superiority in action,
You drew me from my honourable toils
In distant lands—on flood, in field, in cities—
You singled me out like a victim to
Stand crown'd, but bound and helpless, at the altar
Where you alone could minister. I knew not,
I sought not, wish'd not, dream'd not the election,
Which reach'd me first at Rome, and I obey'd;
But found on my arrival, that, besides
The jealous vigilance which always led you
To mock and mar your sovereign's best intents,
• You had, even in the interregnum of
My journey to the capital, curtail'd
And mutilated the few privileges
Yet left the duke: all this I bore, and would
Have borne, until my very heart was stain'd
By the pollution of your ribaldry,
And he, the ribald, whom I see amongst you—
Fit judge in such a tribunal!—

Ben. (interrupting him). Michel Steno

Is here in virtue of his office, as
 One of the Forty; "The Ten" having craved
 A Giunta of patricians from the senate
 To aid our judgment in a trial arduous
 And novel as the present: he was set
 Free from the penalty pronounced upon him,
 Because the Doge, who should protect the law,
 Seeking to abrogate all law, can claim
 No punishment of others by the statutes
 Which he himself denies and violates!

Doge. His PUNISHMENT! I rather see him *there*,
 Where he now sits, to glut him with my death,
 Than in the mockery of castigation.
 Which your foul, outward, juggling show of justice
 Decreed as sentence! Base as was his crime,
 'T was purity compared with your protection.

Ben. And can it be, that the great Doge of Venice,
 With three parts of a century of years
 And honours on his head, could thus allow
 His fury, like an angry boy's, to master
 All feeling, wisdom, faith, and fear, on such
 A provocation as a young man's petulance?

Doge. A spark creates the flame—'t is the last drop
 Which makes the cup run o'er, and mine was full
 Already: you oppress'd the prince and people;
 I would have freed both, and have fail'd in both:
 The price of such success would have been glory,
 Vengeance, and victory, and such a name
 As would have made Venetian history
 Rival to that of Greece and Syracuse
 When they were freed, and flourish'd ages after,
 And mine to Gelon and to Thrasybulus:—
 Failing, I know the penalty of failure
 Is present infamy and death—the future
 Will judge, when Venice is no more, or free;
 Till then, the truth is in abeyance. Pause not;
 I would have shown no mercy, and I seek none;
 My life was staked upon a mighty hazard,
 And being lost, take what I would have taken!
 I would have stood alone amidst your tombs:
 Now you may flock round mine, and trample on it,
 As you have done upon my heart while living.

Ben. You do confess then, and admit the justice
Of our tribunal?

Doge. I confess to have fail'd ;
Fortune is female : from my youth her favours
Were not withheld, the fault was mine to hope
Her former smiles again at this late hour.

Ben. You do not then in aught arraign our equity ?

Doge. Noble Venetians ! stir me not with questions.
I am resign'd to the worst ; but in me still
Have something of the blood of brighter days,
And am not over-patient. Pray you, spare me
Further interrogation, which boots nothing,
Except to turn a trial to debate.
I shall but answer that which will offend you,
And please your enemies—a host already ;
'T is true these sullen walls should yield no echo :
But walls have ears—nay, more, they have tongues ; and if
There were no other way for truth to o'erleap them,
You who condemn me, you who fear and slay me,
Yet could not bear in silence to your graves
What you would hear from me of good or evil ;
The secret were too mighty for your souls :
Then let it sleep in mine, unless you court
A danger which would double that you escape.
Such my defence would be, had I full scope
To make it famous ; for true *words* are *things*,
And dying men's are things which long outlive,
And oftentimes avenge them ; bury mine,
If ye would fain survive me : take this counsel,
And though too oft ye made me live in wrath,
Let me die calmly ; you may grant me this :
I deny nothing, defend nothing, nothing
I ask of you, but silence for myself,
And sentence from the court !

Ben. This full admission
Spares us the harsh necessity of ordering
The torture to elicit the whole truth.

Doge. The torture ! you have put me there already,
Daily since I was Doge ; but if you will
Add the corporeal rack, you may : these limbs
Will yield with age to crushing iron ; but
There's that within my heart shall strain your engines.

Enter an OFFICER.

Officer. Noble Venetians ! Duchess Faliero
Requests admission to the Giunta's presence.

Ben. Say, conscript fathers, shall she be admitted ?

One of the Giunta. She may have revelations of import-
Unto the state, to justify compliance [ance
With her request.

Ben. Is this the general will ?

All. It is.

Doge. Oh, admirable laws of Venice !
Which would admit the wife, in the full hope
That she might testify against the husband.
What glory to the chaste Venetian dames !
But such blasphemers 'gainst all honour, as
Sit here, do well to act in their vocation.
Now, villain Steno ! if this woman fail,
I'll pardon thee thy lie, and thy escape,
And my own violent death, and thy vile life.

The DUCHESS enters.

Ben. Lady ! this just tribunal has resolved,
Though the request be strange, to grant it, and
Whatever be its purport, to accord
A patient hearing with the due respect
Which fits your ancestry, your rank, and virtues :
But you turn pale—ho ! there, look to the lady ?
Place a chair instantly.

Ang. A moment's faintness—
'Tis past ; I pray you pardon me,—I sit not
In presence of my prince and of my husband,
While he is on his feet.

Ben. Your pleasure, lady ?

Ang. Strange rumours, but most true, if all I hear
And see be sooth, have reach'd me, and, I come
To know the worst, even at the worst ; forgive
The abruptness of my entrance and my bearing.
Is it—I cannot speak—I cannot shape
The question—but you can answer it ere spoken,
With eyes averted, and with gloomy brows—
Oh God ! this is the silence of the grave !

Ben. (after a pause). Spare us, and spare thyself the
repetition

Of our most awful, but inexorable
Duty to Heaven and man !

Ang. Yet speak ; I cannot—
I cannot—no—even now believe these things.
Is *he* condemned ?

Ben. Alas !

Ang. And was he guilty ?

Ben. Lady ! the natural distraction of
Thy thoughts at such a moment makes the question
Merit forgiveness ; else a doubt like this
Against a just and paramount tribunal
Were deep offence. But question even the Doge,
And if he can deny the proofs, believe him
Guiltless as thy own bosom.

Ang. Is it so ?

My lord, my sovereign, my poor father's friend,
The mighty in the field, the sage in council,
Unsay the words of this man !—Thou art silent !

Ben. He hath already own'd to his own guilt,
Nor, as thou see'st, doth he deny it now.

Ang. Ay, but he must not die ! Spare his few years,
Which grief and shame will soon cut down to days !
One day of baffled crime must not efface
Near sixteen lustres crowded with brave acts.

Ben. His doom must be fulfill'd without remission
Of time or penalty—'t is a decree.

Ang. He hath been guilty, but there may be mercy.

Ben. Not in this case with justice.

Ang. Alas ! signor,
He who is only just is cruel ; who
Upon the earth would live were all judged justly ?

Ben. His punishment is safety to the state.

Ang. He was a subject, and hath served the state ;
He was your general, and hath saved the state ;
He is your sovereign, and hath ruled the state.

• *One of the Council.* He is a traitor, and betray'd the state.

Ang. And, but for him, there now had been no state
To save or to destroy, and you, who sit
There to pronounce the death of your deliverer,
Had now been groaning at a Moslem oar,
Or digging in the Hunnish mines in fetters ! [die

One of the Council. No, lady, there are others who would
Rather than breathe in slavery !

Ang. If there are so
Within *these* walls, *thou* art not of the number :
The truly brave are generous to the fallen !—
Is there no hope ?

Ben. Lady, it cannot be.

Ang. (turning to the Doge). Then die, Faliero ! since it
must be so ;

But with the spirit of my father's friend.
Thou hast been guilty of a great offence,
Half cancell'd by the harshness of these men.
I would have sued to them, have pray'd to them,
Have begg'd as famish'd mendicants for bread,
Have wept as they will cry unto their God
For mercy, and be answer'd as they answer,—
Had it been fitting for thy name or mine,
And if the cruelty in their cold eyes
Had not announced the heartless wrath within.
Then, as a prince, address thee to thy doom !

Doge. I have lived too long not to know how to die !
Thy suing to these men were but the bleating
Of the lamb to the butcher, or the cry
Of seamen to the surge : I would not take
A life eternal granted at the hands
Of wretches, from whose monstrous villainies
I sought to free the groaning nations !

Michel Steno. Doge,
A word with thee, and with this noble lady,
Whom I have grievously offended. Would
Sorrow, or shame, or penance on my part,
Could cancel the inexorable past !
But since that cannot be, as Christians let us
Say farewell, and in peace : with full contrition
I crave, not pardon, but compassion from you,
And give, however weak, my prayers for both.

Ang. Sage Benintende, now chief judge of Venice,
I speak to thee in answer to yon signor.
Inform the ribald Steno, that his words
Ne'er weigh'd in mind with Loredano's daughter,
Further than to create a moment's pity
For such as he is : would that others had
Despised him as I pity ! I prefer
My honour to a thousand lives, could such
Be multiplied in mine, but would not have

A single life of others lost for that
 Which nothing human can impugn—the sense
 Of virtue, looking not to what is call'd
 A good name for reward, but to itself.
 To me the scorner's words were as the wind
 Unto the rock : but as there are—alas !
 Spirits more sensitive, on which such things
 Light as the whirlwind on the waters ; souls
 To whom dishonour's shadow is a substance
 More terrible than death, here and hereafter ;
 Men whose vice is to start at vice's scoffing,
 And who, though proof against all blandishments
 Of pleasure, and all pangs of pain, are feeble
 When the proud name on which they pinnacled
 Their hopes is breathed on, jealous as the eagle
 Of her high aerie ; let what we now
 Behold, and feel, and suffer, be a lesson
 To wretches how they tamper in their spleen
 With beings of a higher order. Insects
 Have made the lion mad ere now ; a shaft
 I' the heel o'erthrew the bravest of the brave ;
 A wife's dishonour was the bane of Troy ;
 A wife's dishonour unking'd Rome for ever ;
 An injured husband brought the Gauls to Clusium,
 And thence to Rome, which perish'd for a time ;
 An obscene gesture cost Caligula
 His life, whilst Earth yet bore his cruelties ;
 A virgin's wrong made Spain a Moorish province ;
 And Steno's lie, couch'd in two worthless lines,
 Hath decimated Venice, put in peril
 A senate which hath stood eight hundred years,
 Discrown'd a prince, cut off his crownless head,
 And forged new fetters for a groaning people !
 Let the poor wretch, like to the courtesan
 Who fired Persepolis, be proud of this,
 If it so please him—'t were a pride fit for him !
 But let him not insult the last hours of
 Him, who, whate'er he now is, *was* a hero,
 By the intrusion of his very prayers ;
 Nothing of good can come from such a source,
 Nor would we aught with him, nor now, nor ever :
 We leave him to himself, that lowest depth
 Of human baseness. Pardon is for men,

And not for reptiles—we have none for Steno,
 And no resentment: things like him must sting,
 And higher beings suffer; 't is the charter
 Of life. The man who dies by the adder's fang
 May have the crawler crush'd, but feels no anger:
 'T was the worm's nature; and some men are worms
 In soul, more than the living things of tombs.

Doge (to Ben.). Signor! complete that which you deem
 your duty

Ben. Before we can proceed upon that duty,
 We would request the princess to withdraw;
 'T will move her too much to be witness to it.

Ang. I know it will, and yet I must endure it,
 For 't is a part of mine—I will not quit,
 Except by force, my husband's side.—Proceed!
 Nay, fear not either shriek, or sigh, or tear;
 Though my heart burst it shall be silent.—Speak!
 I have that within which shall o'ermaster all.

Ben. Marino Faliero, Doge of Venice,
 Count of Val di Marino, Senator,
 And some time General of the Fleet and Army,
 Noble Venetian, many times and oft
 Intrusted by the state with high employments,
 Even to the highest, listen to the sentence.
 Convict by many witnesses and proofs,
 And by thine own confession, of the guilt
 Of treachery and treason, yet unheard of
 Until this trial—the decree is death.
 Thy goods are confiscate unto the state,
 Thy name is razed from out her records, save
 Upon a public day of thanksgiving
 For this our most miraculous deliverance,
 When thou art noted in our calendars
 With earthquakes, pestilence, and foreign foes,
 And the great enemy of man, as subject
 Of grateful masses for Heaven's grace in snatching
 Our lives and country from thy wickedness.
 The place wherein as Doge thou shouldst be painted,
 With thine illustrious predecessors, is
 To be left vacant, with a death-black veil
 Flung over these dim words engraved beneath,—
 "This place is of Marino Faliero,
 Decapitated for his crimes."

Doge.

"His crimes!"

But let it be so;—it will be in vain.

The veil which blackens o'er this blighted name,
And hides, or seems to hide, these lineaments,
Shall draw more gazers than the thousand portraits
Which glitter round it in their pictured trappings—

Your delegated slaves—the people's tyrants!

"Decapitated for his crimes!"—*What crimes?*

Were it not better to record the facts,

So that the contemplator might approve,

Or at the least learn *whence* the crimes arose?

When the beholder knows a Doge conspired,

Let him be told the cause—it is your history.

Ben. Time must reply to that; our sons will judge

Their fathers' judgment, which I now pronounce.

As Doge, clad in the ducal robes and cap,

Thou shalt be led hence to the Giants' Staircase,

Where thou and all our princes are invested;

And there, the ducal crown being first removed

Upon the spot where it was first assumed,

Thy head shall be struck off; and Heaven have mercy

Upon thy soul!

Doge.

Is this the Giunta's sentence?

Ben. It is.

Doge.

I can endure it.—And the time?

Ben. Must be immediate.—Make thy peace with God:

Within an hour thou must be in His presence.

Doge. I am already; and my blood will rise

To Heaven before the souls of those who shed it.

Are all my lands confiscated?

Ben.

They are;

And goods, and jewels, and all kind of treasure,

Except two thousand ducats—these dispose of.

Doge. That's harsh.—I would have fain reserved the
lands

Near to Treviso, which I hold by investment

From Laurence the Count-bishop of Ceneda,

In fief perpetual to myself and heirs,

To portion them (leaving my city spoil,

My palace and my treasures, to your forfeit)

Between my consort and my kinsmen.

Ben.

These

Lie under the state's ban; their chief, thy nephew,

In peril of his own life ; but the council
Postpones his trial for the present. If
Thou wilt a state unto thy widow'd princess,
Fear not, for we will do her justice.

Ang. Signors,
I share not in your spoil ! from henceforth, know
I am devoted unto God alone,
And take my refuge in the cloister.

Doge. Come !
The hour may be a hard one, but 't will end.
Have I aught else to undergo save death ?
Ben. You have nought to do, except confess and die.
The priest is robed, the scimitar is bare,
And both await without. But, above all,
Think not to speak unto the people ; they
Are now by thousands swarming at the gates,
But these are closed : the Ten, the Avogadori,
The Giunta, and the chief men of the Forty,
Alone will be beholders of thy doom,
And they are ready to attend the Doge.

Doge. The Doge !

Ben. Yes, Doge thou hast lived and thou
shalt die

A sovereign ; till the moment which precedes
The separation of that head and trunk,
The ducal crown and head shall be united.
Thou hast forgot thy dignity in deigning
To plot with petty traitors ; not so we,
Who in the very punishment acknowledge
The prince. Thy vile accomplices have died
The dog's death, and the wolf's ; but thou shalt fall
As falls the lion by the hunters, girt
By those who feel a proud compassion for thee,
And mourn even the inevitable death
Provoked by thy wild wrath and regal fierceness.
Now we remit thee to thy preparation :
Let it be brief, and we ourselves will be
Thy guides unto the place where first we were
United to thee as thy subjects, and
Thy senate ; and must now be parted from thee
As such for ever, on the self-same spot.
Guards ! form the Doge's escort to his chamber.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

*The Doge's Apartment.**The DOGE as Prisoner, and the DUCHESS attending him.*

Doge. Now, that the priest is gone, 't were useless all
 To linger out the miserable minutes ;
 But one pang more, the pang of parting from thee,
 And I will leave the last few grains of sand,
 Which yet remain of the accorded hour,
 Still falling—I have done with Time.

Ang. Alas !

And I have been the cause, the unconscious cause ;
 And for this funeral marriage, this black union,
 Which thou, compliant with my father's wish,
 Didst promise at *his* death, thou hast seal'd thine own.

Doge. Not so ; there was that in my spirit ever
 Which shaped out for itself some great reverse ;
 The marvel is, it came not until now—
 And yet it was foretold me.

Ang. How foretold you ?

Doge. Long years ago—so long, they are a doubt
 In memory, and yet they live in annals :
 When I was in my youth, and served the senate
 And signory as podesta and captain
 Of the town of Treviso, on a day
 Of festival, the sluggish bishop who
 Convey'd the Host aroused my rash young anger
 By strange delay, and arrogant reply
 To my reproof : I raised my hand and smote him,
 Until he reel'd beneath his holy burthen ;
 And as he rose from earth again, he raised
 His tremulous hands in pious wrath towards Heaven.
 Thence pointing to the Host, which had fallen from him,
 He turn'd to me, and said, " The hour will come
 When he thou hast o'erthrown shall overthrow thee :
 The glory shall depart from out thy house,
 The wisdom shall be shaken from thy soul,
 And in thy best maturity of mind
 A madness of the heart shall seize upon thee ,
 Passion shall tear thee when all passions cease

In other men, or mellow into virtues ;
 And majesty, which decks all other heads,
 Shall crown to leave thee headless ; honours shall
 But prove to thee the heralds of destruction,
 And hoary hairs of shame, and both of death,
 But not such death as fits an aged man."
 Thus saying, he pass'd on.—That hour is come.

Ang. And with this warning couldst thou not have
 striven

To avert that fatal moment, and atone,
 By penitence, for that which thou hadst done ?

Doge. I own the words went to my heart, so much
 That I remember'd them amid the maze
 Of life, as if they form'd a spectral voice,
 Which shook me in a supernatural dream ;
 And I repented ; but 't was not for me
 To pull in resolution : what must be
 I could not change, and would not fear.—Nay more,
 Thou canst not have forgot, what all remember,
 That on my day of landing here as Doge,
 On my return from Rome, a mist of such
 Unwonted density went on before
 The Bucentaur, like the columnar cloud
 Which usher'd Israel out of Egypt, till
 The pilot was misled, and disembark'd us
 Between the pillars of Saint Mark's, where 't is
 The custom of the state to put to death
 Its criminals, instead of touching at
 The Riva della Paglia, as the wont is,—
 So that all Venice shudder'd at the omen.

Ang. Ah ! little boots it now to recollect
 Such things.

Doge. And yet I find a comfort in
 The thought, that these things are the work of Fate ;
 For I would rather yield to gods than men,
 Or cling to any creed of destiny,
 Rather than deem these mortals, most of whom
 I know to be as worthless as the dust,
 And weak as worthless, more than instruments
 Of an o'erruling power ; they in themselves
 Were all incapable—they could not be
 Victors of him who oft had conquer'd for them.

Ang. Employ the minutes left in aspirations

Of a more healing nature, and in peace
Even with these wretches take thy flight to heaven.

Doge. I *am* at peace : the peace of certainty
That a sure hour will come, when their sons' sons,
And this proud city, and these azure waters,
And all which makes them eminent and bright,
Shall be a desolation and a curse,
A hissing and a scoff unto the nations,
A Carthage, and a Tyre, an Ocean Babel.

Ang. Speak not thus now : the surge of passion still
Sweeps o'er thee to the last ; thou dost deceive
Thyself, and canst not injure them—be calmer.

Doge. I stand within eternity, and see
Into eternity, and I behold—
Ay, palpable as I see thy sweet face
For the last time—the days which I denounce
Unto all time against these wave-girt walls,
And they who are indwellers.

Guard (coming forward). Doge of Venice,
The Ten are in attendance on your highness.

Doge. Then farewell, Angiolina !—one embrace—
Forgive the old man who hath been to thee
A fond but fatal husband—love my memory—
I would not ask so much for me still living,
But thou canst judge of me more kindly now,
Seeing my evil feelings are at rest.
Besides, of all the fruit of these long years,
Glory, and wealth, and power, and fame, and name,
Which generally leave some flowers to bloom
Even o'er the grave, I have nothing left, not even
A little love, or friendship, or esteem,
No, not enough to extract an epitaph
From ostentatious kinsmen ; in one hour
I have uprooted all my former life,
And outlived everything, except thy heart,
The pure, the good, the gentle, which will oft
With unimpair'd but not a clamorous grief
Still keep—Thou turn'st so pale !—Alas ! she faints,
She has no breath, no pulse !—Guards ! lend your aid—
I cannot leave her thus, and yet 't is better,
Since every lifeless moment spares a pang.
When she shakes off this temporary death,
I shall be with the Eternal.—Call her women—

One look !—how cold her hand !—as cold as mine
 Shall be ere she recovers.—Gently tend her,
 And take my last thanks——I am ready now.

[*The Attendants of ANGIOLINA enter, and surround their Mistress, who has fainted.—Exeunt the DOGE, Guards, &c. &c.*

SCENE III.

The Court of the Ducal Palace; the outer gates are shut against the people. The DOGE enters in his ducal robes, in procession with the Council of Ten and other Patricians, attended by the Guards, till they arrive at the top of the "Giants' Staircase" (where the Doges took the oaths); the Executioner is stationed there with his sword.—On arriving, a Chief of the Ten takes off the ducal cap from the Doge's head.

Doge. So now the Doge is nothing, and at last
 I am again Marino Faliero :
 'T is well to be so, though but for a moment.
 Here was I crown'd, and here, bear witness, Heaven !
 With how much more contentment I resign
 That shining mockery, the ducal bauble,
 Than I received the fatal ornament.

One of the Ten. Thou tremblest, Faliero !

Doge.

'T is with age, then.

Ben. Faliero ! hast thou aught further to commend,
 Compatible with justice, to the senate ?

Doge. I would commend my nephew to their mercy,
 My consort to their justice ; for methinks
 My death, and such a death, might settle all
 Between the state and me.

Ben. They shall be cared for ;
 Even notwithstanding thine unheard-of crime.

Doge. Unheard of ! ay, there's not a history
 But shows a thousand crown'd conspirators
Against the people ; but to set them free
 One sovereign only died, and one is dying.

Ben. And who were they who fell in such a cause ?

Doge. The King of Sparta and the Doge of Venice—
 Agis and Faliero.

Ben. Hast thou more
To utter or to do?

Doge. May I speak?

Ben. Thou may'st;

But recollect the people are without,
Beyond the compass of the human voice.

Doge. I speak to Time and to Eternity,
Of which I grow a portion, not to man.
Ye elements! in which to be resolved
I hasten, let my voice be as a spirit
Upon you! Ye blue waves! which bore my banner,
Ye winds! which flutter'd o'er as if you loved it,
And fill'd my swelling sails as they were wafted
To many a triumph! Thou, my native earth,
Which I have bled for! and thou, foreign earth,
Which drank this willing blood from many a wound!
Ye stones, in which my gore will not sink, but
Reck up to heaven! Ye skies, which will receive it!
Thou sun! which shinest on these things, and Thou!
Who kindlest and who quenchest suns!—Attest!
I am not innocent—but are these guiltless?
I perish, but not unavenged: far ages
Float up from the abyss of time to be,
And show these eyes, before they close, the doom
Of this proud city, and I leave my curse
On her and hers for ever!—Yes, the hours
Are silently engendering of the day,
When she, who built 'gainst Attila a bulwark,
Shall yield, and bloodlessly and basely yield,
Unto a bastard Attila, without
Shedding so much blood in her last defence,
As these old veins, oft drain'd in shielding her,
Shall pour in sacrifice.—She shall be bought
And sold, and be an appanage to those
Who shall despise her!—She shall stoop to be
A province for an empire, petty town
In lieu of capital, with slaves for senates,
Beggars for nobles, panders for a people!
Then when the Hebrew's in thy palaces,
The Hun in thy high places, and the Greek
Walks o'er thy mart, and smiles on it for his;
When thy patricians beg their bitter bread
In narrow streets, and in their shameful need

Make their nobility a plea for pity ;
 Then, when the few who still retain a wreck
 Of their great fathers' heritage shall fawn
 Round a barbarian Vice of Kings' Vice-gerent,
 Even in the palace where they sway'd as sovereigns,
 Even in the palace where they slew their sovereign,
 Proud of some name they have disgraced, or sprung
 From an adulteress boastful of her guilt
 With some large gondolier or foreign soldier,
 Shall bear about their bastardy in triumph
 To the third spurious generation ;—when
 Thy sons are in the lowest scale of being,
 Slaves turn'd o'er to the vanquish'd by the victors,
 Despised by cowards for greater cowardice,
 And scorn'd even by the vicious for such vices
 As in the monstrous grasp of their conception
 Defy all codes to image or to name them ;
 Then, when of Cyprus, now thy subject kingdom,
 All thine inheritance shall be her shame
 Entail'd on thy less virtuous daughters, grown
 A wider proverb for worse prostitution ;—
 When all the ills of conquer'd states shall cling thee,
 Vice without splendour, sin without relief
 Even from the gloss of love to smooth it o'er,
 But in its stead, coarse lusts of habitude,
 Prurient yet passionless, cold studied lewdness,
 Depraving nature's frailty to an art ;—
 When these and more are heavy on thee, when
 Smiles without mirth, and pastimes without pleasure,
 Youth without honour, age without respect,
 Meanness and weakness, and a sense of woe
 'Gainst which thou wilt not strive, and dar'st not murmur,
 Have made thee last and worst of peopled deserts,
 Then, in the last gasp of thine agony,
 Amidst thy many murders, think of *mine* !
 Thou den of drunkards with the blood of princes !
 Gehenna of the waters ! thou sea Sodom !
 Thus I devote thee to the infernal gods !
 Thee and thy serpent seed !

[Here the DOGE turns and addresses the Executioner.]

Slave, do thine office !
 Strike as I struck the foe ! Strike as I would

SCENE IV.] *MARINO FALIERO, DOGE OF VENICE.* 227

Have struck those tyrants ! Strike deep as my curse !
Strike—and but once !

[*The DOGE throws himself upon his knees, and as the Executioner raises his sword the scene closes.*

SCENE IV.

The Piazza and Piazzetta of Saint Mark's.—The people in crowds gathered round the grated gates of the Ducal Palace which are shut.

First Citizen. I have gain'd the gate, and can discern
the 'Ten,
Robed in their gowns of state, ranged round the Doge.

Second Cit. I cannot reach thee with mine utmost effort.
How is it ? let us hear at least, since sight
Is thus prohibited unto the people,
Except the occupiers of those bars.

First Cit. One has approach'd the Doge, and now they
strip
The ducal bonnet from his head—and now
He raises his keen eyes to heaven ; I see
Them glitter, and his lips move—Hush ! hush !—no,
'T was but a murmur—Curse upon the distance !
His words are inarticulate, but the voice
Swells up like mutter'd thunder ; would we could
But gather a sole sentence !

Second Cit. Hush ! we perhaps may catch the sound.

First Cit. 'T is vain.

I cannot hear him.—How his hoary hair
Streams on the wind like foam upon the wave !
Now—now—he kneels—and now they form a circle
Round him, and all is hidden—but I see
The lifted sword in air—Ah ! hark ! it falls !

[*The people murmur.*

Third Cit. Then they have murder'd him who would
have freed us.

Fourth Cit. He was a kind man to the commons ever.

Fifth Cit. Wisely they did to keep their portals barr'd.
Would we had known the work they were preparing
Ere we were summon'd here—we would have brought
Weapons, and forced them !

Sixth Cit. Are you sure he's dead?

First Cit. I saw the sword fall—Lo! what have we here?

Enter on the Balcony of the Palace which fronts Saint Mark's Place a CHIEF OF THE TEN, with a bloody sword. He waves it thrice before the People, and exclaims,

"Justice hath dealt upon the mighty Traitor!"

The gates are opened; the populace rush in towards the "Giants' Staircase," where the execution has taken place. The foremost of them exclaims to those behind,

"The gory head rolls down the Giants' Steps!"

[The curtain falls.]

SARDANAPALUS:

A TRAGEDY.

TO

THE ILLUSTRIOUS GOETHE

A STRANGER PRESUMES TO OFFER THE HOMAGE OF A
LITERARY VASSAL TO HIS LIEGE LORD, THE FIRST OF EXISTING WRITERS,
WHO HAS CREATED THE LITERATURE OF HIS OWN COUNTRY,
AND ILLUSTRATED THAT OF EUROPE.

THE UNWORTHY PRODUCTION
WHICH THE AUTHOR VENTURES TO INSCRIBE TO HIM IS ENTITLED
SARDANAPALUS.

PREFACE.

IN publishing the following Tragedies* I have only to repeat, that they were not composed with the most remote view to the stage. On the attempt made by the managers in a former instance, the public opinion has been already expressed. With regard to my own private feelings, as it seems that they are to stand for nothing, I shall say nothing.

* ["Sardanapalus" and "The Two Foscari."]

For the historical foundation of the following compositions the reader is referred to the Notes.

The Author has in one instance attempted to preserve, and in the other to approach, the "unities;" conceiving that with any very distant departure from them, there may be poetry, but can be no drama. He is aware of the unpopularity of this notion in present English literature; but it is not a system of his own, being merely an opinion, which, not very long ago, was the law of literature throughout the world, and is still so in the more civilized parts of it. But "*nous avons changé tout cela*," and are reaping the advantages of the change. The writer is far from conceiving that anything he can adduce by personal precept or example can at all approach his regular, or even irregular, predecessors: he is merely giving a reason why he preferred the more regular formation of a structure, however feeble, to an entire abandonment of all rules whatsoever. Where he has failed, the failure is in the architect,—and not in the art.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

SARDANAPALUS, *King of Nineveh
and Assyria, &c.*
ARBACES, *the Mede who aspired to
the Throne.*
BELESSES, *a Chaldean and Soothsayer.*
SALEMENES, *the King's Brother-in-
Law.*
ALTADA, *an Assyrian Officer of the
Palace.*
PANIA.
ZAMES.
SFERO.
BALEA.

WOMEN.

ZARINA, *the Queen.*
MYRRHA, *an Ionian female Slave,
and the Favourite of SARDANAPALUS.*

*Women composing the Harem of
SARDANAPALUS, Guards, At-
endants, Chaldean Priests,
Maids, &c. &c.*

SCENE.—A Hall in the Royal Palace
of Nineveh.

In this tragedy it has been my intention to follow the account of Diodorus Siculus; reducing it, however, to such dramatic regularity as I best could, and trying to approach the unities. I therefore suppose the rebellion to explode and succeed in one day by a sudden conspiracy, instead of the long war of the history.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Hall in the Palace.*

Salemenes (solus). He hath wrong'd his queen, but still
he is her lord ;

He hath wrong'd my sister, still he is my brother ;
He hath wrong'd his people, still he is their sovereign,
And I must be his friend as well as subject :
He must not perish thus. I will not see
The blood of Nimrod and Semiramis
Sink in the earth, and thirteen hundred years
Of empire ending like a shepherd's tale ;
He must be roused. In his effeminate heart
There is a careless courage which corruption
Has not all quench'd, and latent energies,
Repress'd by circumstance, but not destroy'd—
Steep'd, but not drown'd, in deep voluptuousness.
If born a peasant, he had been a man
To have reach'd an empire : to an empire born,
He will bequeath none ; nothing but a name,
Which his sons will not prize in heritage :
Yet, not all lost, even yet he may redeem
His sloth and shame, by only being that
Which he should be, as easily as the thing
He should not be and is. Were it less toil
To sway his nations than consume his life ?
To head an army than to rule a harem ?
He sweats in palling pleasures, dulls his soul,
And saps his goodly strength, in toils which yield not
Health like the chase, nor glory like the war—
He must be roused. Alas ! there is no sound

[*Sound of soft music heard from within.*]

To rouse him short of thunder. Hark ! the lute,
The lyre, the timbrel ; the lascivious tinklings
Of lulling instruments, the softening voices
Of women, and of beings less than women,
Must chime into the echo of his revel,
While the great king of all we know of earth
Lolls crown'd with roses, and his diadem
Lies negligently by to be caught up
By the first manly hand which dares to snatch it.
Lo, where they come ! already I perceive

The reeking odours of the perfumed trains,
And see the bright gems of the glittering girls,
At once his chorus and his council, flash
Along the gallery, and amidst the damsels,
As femininely garb'd, and scarce less female,
The grandson of Semiramis, the man-queen.—
He comes ! Shall I await him ? yes, and front him,
And tell him what all good men tell each other,
Speaking of him and his. They come, the slaves
Led by the monarch subject to his slaves.

SCENE II.

Enter SARDANAPALUS effeminately dressed, his Head crowned with Flowers, and his Robe negligently flowing, attended by a Train of Women and young Slaves.

Sar. (speaking to some of his attendants). Let the pavilion
over the Euphrates
Be garlanded, and lit, and furnish'd forth
For an especial banquet ; at the hour
Of midnight we will sup there : see nought wanting,
And bid the galley be prepared. There is
A cooling breeze which crisps the broad clear river.
We will embark anon. Fair nymphs, who deign
To share the soft hours of Sardanapalus,
We'll meet again in that the sweetest hour,
When we shall gather like the stars above us,
And you will form a heaven as bright as theirs ;
Till then, let each be mistress of her time,
And thou, my own Ionian Myrrha, choose
Wilt thou along with them or me ?

Myr.

My lord——

Sar. My lord, my life ! why answerest thou so coldly ?
It is the curse of kings to be so answer'd.
Rule thy own hours, thou rulest mine—say, wouldst
thou

Accompany our guests, or charm away
The moments from me ? •

Myr.

The king's choice is mine.

Sar. I pray thee say not so : my chiefest joy
Is to contribute to thine every wish.
I do not dare to breathe my own desire,

Lest it should clash with thine ; for thou art still
Too prompt to sacrifice thy thoughts for others.

Myr. I would remain : I have no happiness
Save in beholding thine ; yet——

Sar. Yet ! what YET ?
Thy own sweet will shall be the only barrier
Which ever rises betwixt thee and me.

Myr. I think the present is the wonted hour
Of council ; it were better I retire. [well : let her retire.

Sal. (*comes forward and says*). The Ionian slave says

Sar. Who answers ? How now, brother ?

Sal. The *queen's* brother,
And your most faithful vassal, royal lord.

Sar. (*addressing his train*). As I have said, let all dis-
pose their hours
Till midnight, when again we pray your presence.

[*The court retiring.*
(*To MYRRHA, who is going*). Myrrha ! I thought thou
wouldst remain.

Myr. Great king,
Thou didst not say so.

Sar. But *thou* lookedst it :
I know each glance of those Ionic eyes,
Which said thou wouldst not leave me.

Myr. Sire ! your brother——

Sal. His *consort's* brother, minion of Ionia !
How darest *thou* name *me* and not blush ?

Sar. Not blush !
Thou hast no more eyes than heart to make her crimson
Like to the dying day on Caucasus,
Where sunset tints the snow with rosy shadows,
And then reproach her with thine own cold blindness,
Which will not see it. What ! in tears, my Myrrha ?

Sal. Let them flow on ; she weeps for more than one,
And is herself the cause of bitterer tears.

Sar. Cursed be he who caused those tears to flow !

Sal. Curse not thyself—millions do that already.

Sar. Thou dost forget thee : make me not remember
I am a monarch.

Sal. Would thou couldst !

Myr. My sovereign,
I pray, and thou, too, prince, permit my absence.

Sar. Since it must be so, and this churl has check'd

Thy gentle spirit, go ; but recollect
That we must forthwith meet : I had rather lose
An empire than thy presence. *[Exit MYRRHA.]*

Sal. It may be
Thou wilt lose both, and both for ever !

Sar. Brother !
I can at least command myself, who listen
To language such as this : yet urge me not
Beyond my easy nature.

Sal. 'T is beyond
That easy, far too easy, idle nature,
Which I would urge thee. Oh that I could rouse thee !
Though 't were against myself.

Sar. By the god Baal !
The man would make me tyrant.

Sal. So thou art.
Think'st thou there is no tyranny but that
Of blood and chains ? The despotism of vice,
The weakness and the wickedness of luxury,
The negligence, the apathy, the evils
Of sensual sloth—produce ten thousand tyrants,
Whose delegated cruelty surpasses
The worst acts of one energetic master,
However harsh and hard in his own bearing.
The false and fond examples of thy lusts
Corrupt no less than they oppress, and sap
In the same moment all thy pageant power
And those who should sustain it ; so that whether
A foreign foe invade, or civil broil
Distract within, both will alike prove fatal :
The first thy subjects have no heart to conquer ;
The last they rather would assist than vanquish.

Sar. Why, what makes thee the mouth-piece of the
people ?

Sal. Forgiveness of the queen's, my sister's wrongs ;
A natural love unto my infant nephews ;
Faith to the king, a faith he may need shortly,
In more than words ; respect for Nimrod's line ;
Also, another thing thou knowest not.

Sar. What 's that ?

Sal. To thee an unknown word.

Sar. Yet speak it ;
I love to learn.

Sal. Virtue.

Sar. Not know the word !
Never was word yet rung so in my ears—
Worse than the rabble's shout, or splitting trumpet ;
I've heard thy sister talk of nothing else.

Sal. To change the irksome theme, then hear of vice.

Sar. From whom ?

Sal. Even from the winds, if thou couldst listen
Unto the echoes of the nation's voice.

Sar. Come, I'm indulgent, as thou knowest, patient,
As thou hast often proved—speak out, what moves thee ?

Sal. Thy peril.

Sar. Say on.

Sal. Thus, then : all the nations,
For they are many, whom thy father left
In heritage, are loud in wrath against thee.

Sar. 'Gainst *me* ! What would the slaves ?

Sal. A king.

Sar. And what

Am I then ?

Sal. In their eyes a nothing ; but
In mine a man who might be something still.

Sar. The railing drunkards ! why, what would they
have ?

Have they not peace and plenty ?

Sal. Of the first
More than is glorious ; of the last far less
Than the king recks of.

Sar. Whose then is the crime,
But the false satraps, who provide no better ?

Sal. And somewhat in the monarch who ne'er looks
Beyond his palace walls, or if he stirs
Beyond them, 't is but to some mountain palace,
Till summer heats wear down. O glorious Baal !
Who built up this vast empire, and wert made
A god, or at the least shin'st like a god
Through the long centuries of thy renown,
This, thy presumed descendant, ne'er beheld
As king the kingdoms thou didst leave as hero,
Won with thy blood, and toil, and time, and peril !
For what ? to furnish imposts for a revel,
Or multiplied extortions for a minion.

Sar. I understand thee—thou wouldst have me go
Forth as a conqueror. By all the stars
Which the Chaldeans read—the restless slaves
Deserve that I should curse them with their wishes,
And lead them forth to glory.

Sal. Wherefore not?
Semiramis—a woman only—led
These our Assyrians to the solar shores
Of Ganges.

Sar. 'Tis most true. And *how* return'd?

Sal. Why, like a *man*—a hero; baffled, but
Not vanquish'd. With but twenty guards, she made
Good her retreat to Bactria.

Sar. And how many
Left she behind in India to the vultures?

Sal. Our annals say not.

Sar. Then I will say for them—
That she had better woven within her palace
Some twenty garments, than with twenty guards
Have fled to Bactria, leaving to the ravens,
And wolves, and men—the fiercer of the three,
Her myriads of fond subjects. Is *this* glory?
Then let me live in ignominy ever.

Sal. All warlike spirits have not the same fate.
Semiramis, the glorious parent of
A hundred kings, although she fail'd in India,
Brought Persia, Media, Bactria, to the realm
Which she once sway'd—and thou *might'st* sway.

Sar. I *sway* them—
She but subdued them.

Sal. It may be ere long
That they will need her sword more than your sceptre.

Sar. There was a certain Bacchus, was there not?
I've heard my Greek girls speak of such—they say
He was a god, that is, a Grecian god,
An idol foreign to Assyria's worship,
Who conquer'd this same golden realm of Ind
Thou prat'st of, where Semiramis was vanquish'd.

Sal. I have heard of such a man; and thou perceiv'st
That he is deem'd a god for what he did.

Sar. And in his godship I will honour him—
Not much as man. What, ho! my cupbearer?

Sal. What means the king?

Sar. To worship your new god
And ancient conqueror. Some wine, I say.

Enter Cupbearer.

Sar. (*addressing the Cupbearer*). Bring me the golden
goblet, thick with gems,
Which bears the name of Nimrod's chalice. Hence,
Fill full, and bear it quickly. [*Exit Cupbearer.*

Sal. Is this moment
A fitting one for the resumption of
Thy yet unslept-off revels?

Re-enter Cupbearer, with wine.

Sar. (*taking the cup from him*). Noble kinsman,
If these barbarian Greeks of the far shores
And skirts of these our realms lie not, this Bacchus
Conquer'd the whole of India, did he not?

Sal. He did, and thence was a deem'd a deity.

Sar. Not so:—of all his conquests a few columns
Which may be his, and might be mine, if I
Thought them worth purchase and conveyance, are
The landmarks of the seas of gore he shed,
The realms he wasted, and the hearts he broke.
But here, here in this goblet is his title
To immortality—the immortal grape
From which he first express'd the soul, and gave
To gladden that of man, as some atonement
For the victorious mischiefs he had done.
Had it not been for this, he would have been
A mortal still in name as in his grave;
And, like my ancestor Semiramis,
A sort of semi-glorious human monster.
Here's that which deified him—let it now
Humanise thee; my surly, chiding brother,
Pledge me to the Greek god!

Sal. For all thy realms
I would not so blaspheme our country's creed.

Sar. That is to say, thou thinkest him a hero,
That he shed blood by oceans; and no god,
Because he turn'd a fruit to an enchantment,
Which cheers the sad, revives the old, inspires

The young, makes weariness forget his toil,
And fear her danger ; opens a new world
When this, the present, palls. Well, then / pledge thee
And *him* as a true man, who did his utmost
In good or evil to surprise mankind. [*Drinks.*]

Sal. Wilt thou resume a revel at this hour?

Sar. And if I did, 't were better than a trophy,
Being bought without a tear. But that is not
My present purpose : since thou wilt not pledge me,
Continue what thou pleasest.
(*To the Cupbearer.*) Boy, retire.

[*Exit Cupbearer.*]

Sal. I would but have recall'd thee from thy dream ;
Better by me awaken'd than rebellion.

Sar. Who should rebel ? or why ? what cause ? pretext ?
I am the lawful king, descended from
A race of kings who knew no predecessors.
What have I done to thee, or to the people,
That thou shouldst rail, or they rise up against me ?

Sal. Of what thou hast done to me, I speak not.

Sar. But
Thou think'st that I have wrong'd the queen : is't not so ?

Sal. Think ! Thou hast wrong'd her !

Sar. Patience, prince, and hear me.
She has all power and splendour of her station,
Respect, the tutelage of Assyria's heirs,
The homage and the appanage of sovereignty.
I married her as monarchs wed—for state,
And loved her as most husbands love their wives.
If she or thou supposedst I could link me
Like a Chaldean peasant to his mate,
Ye knew nor me, nor monarchs, nor mankind.

Sal. I pray thee, change the theme : my blood disdains
Complaint, and Salemenes' sister seeks not
Reluctant love even from Assyria's lord !
Nor would she deign to accept divided passion
With foreign strumpets and Ionian slaves.
The queen is silent.

Sar. And why not her brother ?

Sal. I only echo thee the voice of empires,
Which he who long neglects not long will govern.

Sar. The ungrateful and ungracious slaves ! they murmur
Because I have not shed their blood, nor led them

To dry into the desert's dust by myriads,
 Or whiten with their bones the banks of Gan'ges;
 Nor decimated them with savage laws,
 Nor sweated them to build up pyramids,
 Or Babylonian walls.

Sal. Yet these are trophies
 More worthy of a people and their prince
 Than songs, and lutes, and feasts, and concubines,
 And lavish'd treasures, and contemned virtues.

Sar. Or for my trophies I have founded cities:
 There's Tarsus and Anchialus, both built
 In one day—what could that blood-loving beldame,
 My martial grandam, chaste Semiramis,
 Do more, except destroy them?

Sal. 'Tis most true;
 I own thy merit in those founded cities,
 Built for a whim, recorded with a verse,
 Which shames both them and thee to coming ages.

Sar. Shame me! By Baal, the cities, though well built,
 Are not more goodly than the verse! Say what
 Thou wilt 'gainst me, my mode of life or rule,
 But nothing 'gainst the truth of that brief record.
 Why, those few lines contain the history
 Of all things human: hear—"Sardanapalus,
 The king, and son of Anacyndaraxes,
 In one day built Anchialus and Tarsus.
 Eat, drink, and love; the rest's not worth a fillip."

Sal. A worthy moral, and a wise inscription,
 For a king to put up before his subjects!

Sar. On, thou wouldst have me doubtless set up edicts—
 "Obey the king—contribute to his treasure—
 Recruit his phalanx—spill your blood at bidding—
 Fall down and worship, or get up and toil."
 Or thus—"Sardanapalus on this spot
 Slew fifty thousand of his enemies.
 These are their sepulchres, and this his trophy."
 I leave such things to conquerors; enough
 For me, if I can make my subjects feel
 The weight of human misery less, and glide
 Ungroaning to the tomb: I take no license
 Which I deny to them. We all are men.

Sal. Thy sires have been revered as gods—

Sar.

In dust

And death, where they are neither gods nor men.
Talk not of such to me ! the worms are gods ;
At least they banqueted upon your gods.
And died for lack of further nutriment.
Those gods were merely men ; look to their issue—
I feel a thousand mortal things about me,
But nothing godlike,—unless it may be
The thing which you condemn, a disposition
To love and to be merciful, to pardon
The follies of my species, and (that's human)
To be indulgent to my own.

Sal.

Alas !

The doom of Nineveh is seal'd.—Woe—woe
To the unrival'd city !

Sar.

What dost dread ?

Sal. Thou art guarded by thy foes : in a few hours
The tempest may break out which overwhelms thee,
And thine and mine ; and in another day
What *is* shall be the past of Belus' race.

Sar. What must we dread ?

Sal.

Ambitious treachery,

Which has environ'd thee with snares ; but yet
There is resource ; empower me with thy signet
To quell the machinations, and I lay
The heads of thy chief foes before thy feet.

Sar. The heads—how many ?

Sal.

Must I stay to number

When even thine own's in peril ? Let me go ;
Give me thy signet—trust me with the rest.

Sar. I will trust no man with unlimited lives.

When we take those from others, we nor know
What we have taken, nor the thing we give. [thine ?

Sal. Wouldst thou not take their lives who seek for

Sar. That's a hard question— But I answer, Yes.

Cannot the thing be done without ? Who are they
Whom thou suspectest ?—Let them be arrested.

Sal. I would thou wouldst not ask me ; the next moment
Will send my answer through thy babbling troop
Of paramours, and thence fly o'er the palace,
Even to the city, and so baffle all.—

Trust me.

Sar. Thou knowest I have done so ever ;

Take thou the signet.

[Gives the signet.

Sal. I have one more request.

Sar. Name it.

Sal. That thou this night forbear the banquet
In the pavilion over the Euphrates.

Sar. Forbear the banquet! Not for all the plotters
That ever shook a kingdom! Let them come,
And do their worst: I shall not blench for them;
Nor rise the sooner; nor forbear the goblet;
Nor crown me with a single rose the less;
Nor lose one joyous hour.—I fear them not.

Sal. But thou wouldst arm thee, wouldst thou not, if
needful?

Sar. Perhaps. I have the goodliest armour, and
A sword of such a temper; and a bow
And javelin, which might furnish Nimrod forth:
A little heavy, but yet not unwieldy.
And now I think on 't, 't is long since I've used them,
Even in the chase. Hast ever seen them, brother?

Sal. Is this a time for such fantastic triffing?—
If need be, wilt thou wear them?

Sar. Will I not?
Oh! if it must be so, and these rash slaves
Will not be ruled with less, I'll use the sword
Till they shall wish it turn'd into a distaff.

Sal. They say thy sceptre's turn'd to that already.

Sar. That's false! but let them say so: the old Greeks,
Of whom our captives often sing, related
The same of their chief hero, Hercules,
Because he loved a Lydian queen: thou seest
The populace of all the nations seize
Each calumny they can to sink their sovereigns.

Sal. They did not speak thus of thy fathers.

Sar. No;
They dared not. They were kept to toil and combat;
And never changed their chains but for their armour:
Now they have peace and pastime, and the license
To revel and to rail; it irks me not.
I would not give the smile of one fair girl
For all the popular breath that e'er divided
A name from nothing. What are the rank tongues
Of this vile herd, grown insolent with feeding,
That I should prize their noisy praise, or dread
Their noisome clamour?

Sal. You have said they are men ;
As such their hearts are something.

Sar. So my dogs' are ;
And better, as more faithful :—but, proceed ;
Thou hast my signet :—since they are tumultuous
Let them be temper'd, yet not roughly, till
Necessity enforce it. I hate all pain,
Given or received ; we have enough within us,
The meanest vassal as the loftiest monarch,
Not to add to each other's natural burthen
Of mortal misery, but rather lessen,
By mild reciprocal alleviation,
The fatal penalties imposed on life :
But this they know not, or they will not know,
I have, by Baal ! done all I could to soothe them :
I made no wars, I added no new imposts,
I interfered not with their civic lives,
I let them pass their days as best might suit them :
Passing my own as suited me.

Sal. Thou stopp'st
Short of the duties of a king ; and therefore
They say thou art unfit to be a monarch.

Sar. They lie.—Unhappily, I am unfit
To be aught save a monarch ; else for me
The meanest Mede might be the king instead.

Sal. There is one Mede, at least, who seeks to be so.

Sar. What mean'st thou ?—'t is thy secret ; thou desirest

Few questions, and I'm not of curious nature.
Take the fit steps ; and, since necessity
Requires, I sanction and support thee. Ne'er
Was man who more desired to rule in peace
The peaceful only : if they rouse me, better
They had conjured up stern Nimrod from his ashes,
"The mighty hunter." I will turn these realms
To one wide desert chase of brutes, who *were*,
But *would* no more, by their own choice, be human.
What they have found me, they belie ; *that which*
They may find me—shall defy their wish
To speak it worse ; and let them thank themselves.

Sal. Then thou at last canst feel ?

Sar. Feel ! who feels not
Ingratitude ?

Sal. I will not pause to answer
With words, but deeds. Keep thou awake that energy
Which sleeps at times, but is not dead within thee,
And thou may'st yet be glorious in thy reign,
As powerful in thy realm. Farewell!

[*Exit SALEMENES.*
Farewell!]

Sar. (solus).
He's gone; and on his finger bears my signet,
Which is to him a sceptre. He is stern
As I am heedless; and the slaves deserve
To feel a master. What may be the danger,
I know not: he hath found it, let him quell it.
Must I consume my life—this little life—
In guarding against all may make it less?
It is not worth so much! It were to die
Before my hour, to live in dread of death,
Tracing revolt; suspecting all about me,
Because they are near; and all who are remote,
Because they are far. But if it should be so—
If they should sweep me off from earth and empire,
Why, what is earth or empire of the earth?
I have loved, and lived, and multiplied my image;
To die is no less natural than those
Acts of this clay! 'Tis true I have not shed
Blood as I might have done, in oceans, till
My name became a synonyme of death—
A terror and a trophy. But for this
I feel no penitence; my life is love:
If I must shed blood, it shall be by force.
Till now, no drop from an Assyrian vein
Hath flow'd for me, nor hath the smallest coin
Of Nineveh's vast treasures e'er been lavish'd
On objects which could cost her sons a tear:
If then they hate me, 't is because I hate not:
If they rebel, 't is because I oppress not.
Oh, men! ye must be ruled with scythes, not sceptres,
And mow'd down like the grass, else all we reap
Is rank abundance, and a rotten harvest
Of discontents affecting the fair soil,
Making a desert of fertility.—
I'll think no more.—Within there, ho!

Enter an ATTENDANT.

Sar. Slave, tell
The Ionian Myrrha we could crave her presence.
Attend. King, she is here.

MYRRHA enters.

Sar. (apart to Attendant). Away !
(Addressing MYRRHA). Beautiful being !
Thou dost almost anticipate my heart ;
It throb'd for thee, and here thou comest : let me
Deem that some unknown influence, some sweet oracle,
Communicates between us, though unseen,
In absence, and attracts us to each other.

Myr. There doth.

Sar. I know there doth, but not its name :
What is it ?

Myr. In my native land a god,
And in my heart a feeling like a god's,
Exalted ; yet I own 't is only mortal ;
For what I feel is humble, and yet happy—
That is, it would be happy ; but—— [*MYRRHA pauses.*]

Sar. There comes
For ever something between us and what
We deem our happiness : let me remove
The barrier which that hesitating accent
Proclaims to thine, and mine is seal'd.

Myr. My lord !

Sar. My lord—my king—sire—sovereign ; thus it is—
For ever thus, address'd with awe. I ne'er
Can see a smile, unless in some broad banquet's
Intoxicating glare, when the buff ons
Have gorged themselves up to equality,
Or I have quaff'd me down to their abasement.
Myrrha, I can hear all these things, these names,
Lord—king—sire—monarch—nay, time was I prized
them ;

That is, I suffer'd them—from slaves and nobles ;
But when they falter from the lips I love,
The lips which have been press'd to mine, a chill
Comes o'er my heart, a cold sense of the falsehood
Of this my station, which represses feeling
In those for whom I have felt most, and makes me

Wish that I could lay down the dull tiara,
And share a cottage on the Caucasus
With thee, and wear no crowns but those of flowers.

Myr. Would that we could !

Sar. And dost *thou* feel this ?—Why ?

Myr. Then thou wouldst know what thou canst never
know.

Sar. And that is——

Myr. The true value of a heart ;

At least, a woman's.

Sar. I have proved a thousand——

A thousand, and a thousand.

Myr. Hearts ?

Sar. I think so.

Myr. Not one ! the time may come thou may'st.

Sar. It will.

Hear, Myrrha ; Salemenes has declared——
Or why or how he hath divined it, Belus,
Who founded our great realm, knows more than I——
But Salemenes hath declared my throne
In peril.

Myr. He did well.

Sar. And say'st *thou* so ?

Thou whom he spurn'd so harshly, and now dared
Drive from our presence with his savage jeers,
And made thee weep and blush ?

Myr. I should do both
More frequently, and he did well to call me
Back to my duty. But thou spak'st of peril——
Peril to thee——

Sar. Ay, from dark plots and snares
From Medes—and discontented troops and nations,
I know not what—a labyrinth of things——
A maze of mutter'd threats and mysteries :
Thou know'st the man—it is his usual custom.
But he is honest. Come, we'll think no more on't——
But of the midnight festival.

Myr. 'T is time
To think of aught save festivals. Thou hast not
Spurn'd his sage cautions ?

Sar. What ?—and dost thou fear ?

Myr. Fear !—I'm a Greek, and how should I fear death ?
A slave, and wherefore should I dread my freedom ?

Sar. Then wherefore dost thou turn so pale?

Myr.

I love.

Sar. And do not I? I love thee far—far more
Than either the brief life or the wide realm,
Which, it may be, are menaced ;—yet I blench not.

Myr. That means thou lovest nor thyself nor me ;
For he who loves another loves himself,
Even for that other's sake. This is too rash :
Kingdoms and lives are not to be so lost.

Sar. Lost !—why, who is the aspiring chief who dared
Assume to win them?

Myr. Who is he should dread
To try so much? When he who is their ruler
Forgets himself, will they remember him?

Sar. Myrrha!

Myr. Frown not upon me ; you have smiled
Too often on me not to make those frowns
Bitterer to bear than any punishment
Which they may augur.—King, I am your subject !
Master, I am your slave ! Man, I have loved you !—
Loved you, I know not by what fatal weakness,
Although a Greek, and born a foe to monarchs—
A slave, and hating fetters—an Ionian,
And, therefore, when I love a stranger, more
Degraded by that passion than by chains !
Still I have loved you. If that love were strong
Enough to overcome all former nature,
Shall it not claim the privilege to save you?

Sar. Save me, my beauty ! Thou art very fair
And what I seek of thee is love—not safety.

Myr. And without love where dwells security?

Sar. I speak of woman's love.

Myr. The very first
Of human life must spring from woman's breast,
Your first small words are taught you from her lips,
Your first tears quench'd by her, and your last sighs
Too often breathed out in a woman's hearing,
When men have shrunk from the ignoble care
Of watching the last hour of him who led them.

Sar. My eloquent Ionian ! thou speak'st music ;
The very chorus of the tragic song
I have heard thee talk of as the favourite pastime
Of thy far father-land. Nay, weep not—calm thee.

Myr. I weep not.—But I pray thee, do not speak
About my fathers or their land.

Sar. Yet oft
Thou speakest of them.

Myr. True—true: constant thought
Will overflow in words unconsciously;
But when another speaks of Greece, it wounds me.

Sar. Well, then, how wouldst thou *save* me, as thou
saidst?

Myr. By teaching thee to save thyself, and not
Thyself alone, but these vast realms, from all
The rage of the worst war—the war of brethren.

Sar. Why, child, I loathe all war and warriors;
I live in peace and pleasure: what can man
Do more?

Myr. Alas! my lord, with common men
There needs too oft the show of war to keep
The substance of sweet peace; and, for a king,
’T is sometimes better to be fear’d than loved.

Sar. And I have never sought but for the last,

Myr. And now art neither.

Sar. Dost *thou* say so, Myrrha?

Myr. I speak of civic popular love, *self-love*,
Which means that men are kept in awe and law,
Yet not oppress’d—at least they must not think so,
Or if they think so, deem it necessary,
To ward off worse oppression, their own passions.
A king of feasts, and flowers, and wine, and revel,
And love, and mirth, was never king of glory.

Sar. Glory! what’s that?

Myr. Ask of the gods thy fathers.

Sar. They cannot answer; when the priests speak for
’T is for some small addition to the temple. [them,

Myr. Look to the annals of thine empire’s founders.

Sar. They are so blotted o’er with blood, I cannot.
But what wouldst have? the empire *has been* founded.
I cannot go on multiplyin; empires.

Myr. Preserve thine own.

Sar. At least I will enjoy it.
Come, Myrrha, let us go on to the Euphrates:
The hour invites, the galley is prepared,
And the pavilion, deck’d for our return,

In fit adornment for the evening banquet,
Shall blaze with beauty and with light, until
It seems unto the stars which are above us
Itself an opposite star ; and we will sit
Crown'd with fresh flowers like ——

Myr.

Victims.

Sar.

No, like sovereigns,

The shepherd kings of patriarchal times,
Who knew no brighter gems than summer wreaths,
And none but tearless triumphs. Let us on.

Enter PANIA.

Pan. May the king live for ever !

Sar.

Not an hour

Longer than he can love. How my soul hates
This language, which makes life itself a lie,
Flattering dust with eternity ! Well, Pania !
Be brief.

Pan. I am charged by Salemenes to
Reiterate his prayer unto the king,
That for this day, at least, he will not quit
The palace : when the general returns,
He will adduce such reasons as will warrant
His daring, and perhaps obtain the pardon
Of his presumption.

Sar.

What ! am I then coop'd ?
Already captive ? can I not even breathe
The breath of heaven ? Tell prince Salemenes,
Were all Assyria raging round the walls
In mutinous myriads, I would still go forth.

Pan. I must obey you, and yet ——

Myr.

O, monarch, listen.

How many a day and moon hast thou reclined
Within these palace walls in silken dalliance,
And never shown thee to thy people's longing ;
Leaving thy subjects' eyes ungratified,
The satraps uncontroll'd, the gods unworshipp'd,
And all things in the anarchy of sloth,
Till all, save evil, slumber'd through the realm !
And wilt thou not now tarry for a day, —
A day which may redeem thee ? Wilt thou not

Yield to the few still faithful a few hours,
For them, for thee, for thy past fathers' race,
And for thy sons' inheritance?

Pan. 'T is true !
From the deep urgency with which the prince
Despatch'd me to your sacred presence, I
Must dare to add my feeble voice to that
Which now has spoken.

Sar. No, it must not be.

Myr. For the sake of thy realm !

Sar. Away !

Pan. For that
Of all thy faithful subjects, who will rally
Round thee and thine.

Sar. These are mere fantasies :
There is no peril : 't is a sullen scheme
Of Salemenes, to approve his zeal,
And show himself more necessary to us.

Myr. By all that's good and glorious take this counsel.

Sar. Business to-morrow.

Myr. Ay, or death to-night.

Sar. Why let it come then unexpectedly,
'Midst joy and gentleness, and mirth and love ;
So let me fall like the pluck'd rose !—far better
Thus than be wither'd.

Myr. Then thou wilt not yield
Even for the sake of all that ever stirr'd
A monarch into action, to forego
A trifling revel.

Sar. No.

Myr. Then yield for *mine* ;
For my sake !

Sar. Thine, my Myrrha !

Myr. 'T is the first
Boon which I ever ask'd Assyria's king.

Sar. That's true, and were't my kingdom, must be
granted.

Well, for thy sake, I yield me. *Pania, hence !*
Thou hear'st me.

Pan. And obey. *[Exit PANIA.]*

Sar. I marvel at thee.
What is thy motive, Myrrha, thus to urge me ?

Myr. Thy safety ; and the certainty that nought

Could urge the prince thy kinsman to require
Thus much from thee, but some impending danger.

Sar. And if I do not dread it, why shouldst thou?

Myr. Because *thou* dost not fear, I fear for *thee*.

Sar. To-morrow thou wilt smile at these vain fancies.

Myr. If the worst come, I shall be where none weep,
And that is better than the power to smile.

And thou?

Sar. I shall be king, as heretofore.

Myr. Where?

Sar. With Baal, Nimrod, and Semiramis,
Sole in Assyria, or with them elsewhere.

Fate made me what I am—may make me nothing—

But either that or nothing must I be:

I will not live degraded.

Myr. Hadst thou felt
Thus always, none would ever dare degrade thee.

Sar. And who will do so now?

Myr. Dost thou suspect none?

Sar. Suspect!—that's a spy's office. Oh! we lose
Ten thousand precious moments in vain words,
And vainer fears. Within there!—ye slaves, deck
The hall of Nimrod for the evening revel:
If I must make a prison of our palace,
At least we'll wear our fetters jorundly;
If the Euphrates be forbid us, and
The summer dwelling on its beauteous border,
Here we are still unmenaced. Ho! within there!

[*Exit SARDANAPALUS.*

Myr. (sola). Why do I love this man? My country's
daughters

Love none but heroes. But I have no country!
The slave hath lost all save her bonds. I love him;
And that's the heaviest link of the long chain—
To love whom we esteem not. Be it so:
The hour is coming when he'll need all love,
And find none. To fall from him now were baser
Than to have stabb'd him on his throne when highest
Would have been noble in my country's creed:
I was not made for either. Could I save him,
I should not love *him* better, but myself;
And I have need of the last, for I have fallen
In my *own* thoughts, by loving this soft stranger:

And yet methinks I love him more, perceiving
That he is hated of his own barbarians,
The natural foes of all the blood of Greece.
Could I but wake a single thought like those
Which even the Phrygians felt when battling long
'Twixt Ilion and the sea, within his heart,
He would tread down the barbarous crowds, and triumph.
He loves me, and I love him; the slave loves
Her master, and would free him from his vices.
If not, I have a means of freedom still,
And if I cannot teach him how to reign,
May show him how alone a king can leave
His throne. I must not lose him from my sight. [Exit.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*The Portal of the same Hall of the Palace.*

Beleses (solus). The sun goes down: methinks he sets
more slowly,
Taking his last look of Assyria's empire.
How red he glares amongst those deepening clouds,
Like the blood he predicts! If not in vain,
Thou sun that sinkest, and ye stars which rise,
I have outwatch'd ye, reading ray by ray
The edicts of your orbs, which make Time tremble
For what he brings the nations, 't is the furthest
Hour of Assyria's years. And yet how calm!
An earthquake should announce so great a fall—
A summer's sun discloses it. Yon disk,
To the star-read Chaldean, bears upon
Its everlasting page the end of what
Seem'd everlasting; but oh! thou true sun,
The burning oracle of all that live,
As fountain of all life, and symbol of
Him who bestows it, wherefore dost thou limit
Thy lore unto calamity? Why not
Unfold the rise of days more worthy thine
All-glorious burst from ocean? why not dart
A beam of hope athwart the future years,
As of wrath to its days? Hear me! oh, hear me!
I am thy worshipper, thy priest, thy servant—

I have gazed on thee at thy rise and fall,
And bow'd my head beneath thy mid-day beams,
When my eye dared not meet thee. I have watch'd
For thee, and after thee, and pray'd to thee,
And sacrificed to thee, and read, and fear'd thee,
And ask'd of thee, and thou hast answer'd—but
Only to thus much : while I speak, he sinks—
Is gone—and leaves his beauty, not his knowledge,
To the delighted west, which revels in
Its hues of dying glory. Yet what is
Death, so it be but glorious? 'T is a sunset;
And mortals may be happy to resemble
The gods but in decay.

Enter ARBACES by an inner door.

Arb. Beleses, why
So rapt in thy devotions? Dost thou stand
Gazing to trace thy disappearing god
Into some realm of undiscover'd day?
Our business is with night—'t is come.

Bel. But not
Gone.

Arb. Let it roll on—we are ready.

Bel. Yes.
Would it were over!

Arb. Does the prophet doubt,
To whom the very stars shine victory?

Bel. I do not doubt of victory—but the victor.

Arb. Well, let thy science settle that. Meantime
I have prepared as many glittering spears
As will out-sparkle our allies—your planets.
There is no more to thwart us. The she-king,
That less than woman, is even now upon
The waters, with his female mates. The order
Is issued for the feast in the pavilion.
The first cup which he drains will be the last
Quaff'd by the line of Nimrod.

Bel. 'T was a brave one.

Arb. And is a weak one—'t is worn out—we'll mend it.

Bel. Art sure of that?

Arb. Its founder was a hunter—
I am a soldier—what is there to fear?

Bel. The soldier.

Arb. And the priest it may be : but
 If you thought thus, or think, why not retain
 Your king of concubines? why stir me up?
 Why spur me to this enterprise? your own
 No less than mine?

Bel. Look to the sky!

Arb. I look.

Bel. What seest thou?

Arb. A fair summer's twilight, and
 The gathering of the stars.

Bel. And midst them, mark
 Yon earliest, and the brightest, which so quivers,
 As it would quit its place in the blue ether.

Arb. Well!

Bel. 'Tis thy natal ruler—thy birth planet.

Arb. (*touching his scabbard*). My star is in this scabbard:
 when it shines,

It shall out-dazzle comets. Let us think
 Of what is to be done to justify
 Thy planets and their portents. When we conquer,
 They shall have temples—ay, and priests—and thou
 Shall be the pontiff of—what gods thou wilt;
 For I observe that they are ever just,
 And own the bravest for the most devout.

Bel. Ay, and the most devout for brave—thou hast not
 Seen me turn back from battle.

Arb. No; I own thee
 As firm in fight as Babylonia's captain,
 As skilful in Chaldea's worship: now,
 Will it but please thee to forget the priest,
 And be the warrior?

Bel. Why not both?

Arb. The better;
 And yet it almost shames me, we shall have
 So little to effect. This woman's warfare
 Degrades the very conqueror. To have pluck'd
 A bold and bloody despot from his throne,
 And grappled with him, clashing steel with steel,
 That were heroic or to win or fall;
 But to upraise my sword against this silkworm,
 And hear him whine, it may be——

Bel. Do not deem it:
 He has that in him which may make you strife yet;

And were he all you think, his guards are hardy,
And headed by the cool, stern Salemenes.

Arb. They'll not resist.

Bel. Why not? they're soldiers.

Arb. True,

And therefore need a soldier to command them.

Bel. That Salemenes is.

Arb. But not their king.

Besides, he hates the effeminate thing that governs,
For the queen's sake, his sister. Mark you not
He keeps aloof from all the revels?

Bel. But

Not from the council—there he's ever constant.

Arb. And ever thwarted: what would you have more
To make a rebel out of? A fool reigning,
His blood dishonour'd, and himself disdain'd:
Why, it is *his* revenge we work for.

Bel. Could

He but be brought to think so: this I doubt of.

Arb. What, if we sound him?

Bel. Yes—if the time served.

Enter BALEA.

Bal. Satraps! The king commands your presence at
The feast to night.

Bel. To hear is to obey.

In the pavilion?

Bal. No; here in the palace.

Arb. How! in the palace? it was not thus order'd.

Bal. It is so order'd now.

Arb. And why?

Bal. I know not.

May I retire?

Arb. Stay.

Bel. (to Arb. aside). Hush! let him go his way.

(Al.ternately to Bal.) Yes, Balea, thank the monarch, kiss
the hem

Of his imperial robe, and say, his slaves
Will take the crumbs he deigns to scatter from
His royal table at the hour—was't midnight?

Bal. It was: the place, the hall of Nimrod. Lords,
I humble me before you, and depart. *[Exit BALEA.]*

Arb. I like not this same sudden change of place ;
There is some mystery : wherefore should he change it ?

Bel. Doth he not change a thousand times a day ?
Sloth is of all things the most fanciful—
And moves more parasangs in its intents
Than generals in their marches, when they seek
To leave their foe at fault.—Why dost thou muse ?

Arb. He loved that gay pavilion,—it was ever
His summer dotage.

Bel. And he loved his queen—
And thrice a thousand harlotry besides—
And he has loved all things by turns, except
Wisdom and glory.

Arb. Still—I like it not.
If he has changed—why, so must we : the attack
Were easy in the isolated bower,
Beset with drowsy guards and drunken courtiers ;
But in the hall of Nimrod——

Bel. Is it so ?
Methought the haughty soldier fear'd to mount
A throne too easily—does it disappoint thee
To find there is a slipperier step or two
Than what was counted on ?

Arb. When the hour comes,
Thou shalt perceive how far I fear or no.
Thou hast seen my life at stake—and gaily play'd for :
But here is more upon the die—a kingdom.

Bel. I have foretold already—thou wilt win it :
Then on, and prosper.

Arb. Now were I a soothsayer,
I would have boded so much to myself.
But be the stars obey'd—I cannot quarrel
With them, nor their interpreter. Who's here ?

Enter SALEMENES.

Sal. Satraps !

Bel. My prince !

Sal. Well met—I sought ye both,
But elsewhere than the palace.

Arb. Wherefore so ?

Sal. 'T is not the hour.

Arb. The hour !—what hour ?

Sal. Of midnight.

Bel. Midnight, my lord !

Sal. What, are you not invited ?

Bel. Oh ! yes—we had forgotten.

Sal. Is it usual

Thus to forget a sovereign's invitation ?

Arb. Why—we but now received it.

Sal. Then why here ?

Arb. On duty.

Sal. On what duty ?

Bel. On the state's.

We have the privilege to approach the presence ;

But found the monarch absent.

Sal. And I too

Am upon duty.

Arb. May we crave its purport ?

Sal. To arrest two traitors. Guards ! Within there !

Enter Guards.

Sal. (*continuing*). Satraps,
Your swords.

Bel. (*delivering his*). My lord, behold my scimitar.

Arb. (*drawing his sword*). Take mine.

Sal. (*advancing*). I will.

Arb. But in your heart the blade—

The hilt quits not this hand.

Sal. (*drawing*). How ! dost thou brave me ?

'T is well—this saves a trial, and false mercy.

Soldiers, hew down the rebel !

Arb. Soldiers ! Ay—

Alone you dare not.

Sal. Alone ! foolish slave—

What is there in thee that a prince should shrink from
Of open force ? We dread thy treason, not

Thy strength : thy tooth is nought without its venom—

The serpent's, not the lion's. Cut him down.

Bel. (*interposing*). Arbaces ! are you mad ? Have I not
render'd

My sword ? Then trust like me our sovereign's justice.

Arb. No—I will sooner trust the stars thou prat'st of,

And this slight arm, and die a king at least

Of my own breath and body—so far that

None else shall chain them.

Sal. (to the Guards). You hear *him* and *me*.
Take him not,—kill.

[*The Guards attack ARBACES, who defends himself valiantly and dexterously till they waver.*

Sal. Is it even so; and must
I do the hangman's office? Recreants! see
How you should fell a traitor.

[*SALEMENES attacks ARBACES.*

Enter SARDANAPALUS and Train.

Sar. Hold your hands—
Upon your lives, I say. What, deaf or drunken?
My sword! O fool, I wear no sword: here, fellow,
Give me thy weapon. [To a Guard.

[*SARDANAPALUS snatches a sword from one of the soldiers, and rushes between the combatants—they separate.*

Sar. In my very palace!
What hinders me from cleaving you in twain,
Audacious brawlers?

Bel. Sire, your justice.

Sal. Or—
Your weakness.

Sar. (raising the sword). How?

Sal. Strike! so the blow's repeated
Upon yon traitor—whom you spare a moment,
I trust, for torture—I'm content.

Sar. What—him!
Who dares assail Arbaces?

Sal. I!

Sar. Indeed!
Prince, you forget yourself. Upon what warrant?

Sal. (showing the signet). Thine.

Arb. (confused). The king's!

Sal. Yes! and let the king confirm it.

Sar. I parted not from this for such a purpose.

Sal. You parted with it for your safety—I
Employ'd it for the best. Pronounce in person.
Here I am but your slave—a moment past
I was your representative. 6

Sar. Then sheathe
Your swords.

[*ARBACES and SALEMENES return their swords to the scabbards.*

Sal. Mine's sheathed : I pray you sheathe *not* yours :

'Tis the sole sceptre left you now with safety.

Sar. A heavy one ; the hilt, too, hurts my hand.
(*To a Guard*). Here, fellow, take thy weapon back. Well, sirs,

What doth this mean ?

Bel. The prince must answer that.

Sal. Truth upon my part, treason upon theirs.

Sar. Treason—Arbaces ! Treachery and Beleses !
That were an union I will not believe.

Bel. Where is the proof ?

Sal. I'll answer that, if once
The king demands your fellow-traitor's sword.

Arb. (to Sal.) A sword which hath been drawn as oft
as thine
Against his foes.

Sal. And now against his brother,
And in an hour or so against himself.

Sar. That is not possible : he dared not ; no—
No—I'll not hear of such things.— These vain bickerings
Are spawn'd in courts by base intrigues, and baser
Hirelings, who live by lies on good men's lives.
You must have been deceived, my brother.

Sal. First
Let him deliver up his weapon, and
Proclaim himself your subject by that duty,
And I will answer all.

Sar. Why, if I thought so—
But no, it cannot be : the Mede Arbaces—
The trusty, rough, true soldier—the best captain
Of all who discipline our nations—No,
I'll not insult him thus, to bid him render
The scimitar to me he never yielded
Unto our enemies. Chief, keep your weapon.

Sal. (delivering back the signet). Monarch, take back
your signet.

Sar. No, retain it ;
But use it with more moderation.

Sal. Sire,
I used it for your honour, and restore it
Because I cannot keep it with my own.
Bestow it on Arbaces.

Sar. So I should :
He never ask'd it.

Sal. Doubt not, he will have it,
Without that hollow semblance of respect.

Bel. I know not what hath prejudiced the prince
So strongly 'gainst two subjects, than whom none
Have been more zealous for Assyria's weal.

Sal. Peace, factious priest, and faithless soldier ! thou
Unitest in thy own person the worst vices
Of the most dangerous orders of mankind.
Keep thy smooth words and juggling homilies
For those who know thee not. Thy fellow's sin
Is, at the least, a bold one, and not temper'd
By the tricks taught thee in Chaldea.

Bel. Hear him,
My liege—the son of Belus ! he blasphemes
The worship of the land, which bows the knee
Before your fathers.

Sar. Oh ! for that I pray you
Let him have absolution. I dispense with
The worship of dead men ; feeling that I
Am mortal, and believing that the race
From whence I sprung are—what I see them—ashes.

Bel. King ! do not deem so : they are with the stars,
And——

Sar. You shall join them ere they will rise,
If you preach further.—Why, *this* is rank treason.

Sal. My lord !

Sar. To school me in the worship of
Assyria's idols ! Let him be released—
Give him his sword.

Sal. My lord, and king, and brother,
I pray ye pause.

Sar. Yes, and be sermonised,
And dinn'd, and deafen'd with dead men and Baal,
And all Chaldea's starry mysteries.

Bel. Monarch ! respect them.

Sar. Oh ! for that—I love them ;
I love to watch them in the deep blue vault,
And to compare them with my Myrrha's eyes ;
I love to see their rays redoubled in
The tremulous silver of Euphrates' wave,
As the light breeze of midnight crisps the broad

And rolling waters, sighing through the sedges
Which fringe his banks : but whether they may be
Gods, as some say, or the abodes of gods,
As others hold, or simply lamps of night,
Worlds, or the lights of worlds, I know nor care not.
There's something sweet in my uncertainty
I would not change for your Chaldean lore;
Besides, I know of these all clay can know
Of aught above it, or below it—nothing.
I see their brilliancy and feel their beauty—
When they shine on my grave I shall know neither.

Bel. For *neither*, sire, say *better*.

Sar. I will wait,
If it so please you, pontiff, for that knowledge.
In the mean time receive your sword, and know
That I prefer your service militant
Unto your ministry—not loving either.

Sal. (*aside*). His lusts have made him mad. Then
must I save him,
Spite of himself.

Sar. Please you to hear me, Satraps !
And chiefly thou, my priest, because I doubt thee
More than the soldier ; and would doubt thee all
Wert thou not half a warrior : let us part
In peace—I'll not say pardon—which must be
Earn'd by the guilty ; this I'll not pronounce ye,
Although upon this breath of mine depends
Your own ; and, deadlier for ye, on my fears.
But fear not—for that I am soft, not fearful—
And so live on. Were I the thing some think me,
Your heads would now be dripping the last drops
Of their attained gore from the high gates
Of this our palace, into the dry dust,
Their only portion of the coveted kingdom
They would be crown'd to reign o'er—let that pass.
As I have said, I will not *deem* ye guilty,
Nor *doom* ye guiltless. Albeit better men
Than ye or I stand ready to arraign you ;
And should I leave your fate to sterner judges,
And proofs of all kinds, I might sacrifice
Two men, who, whatsoe'er they now are, were
Once honest. Ye are free, sirs.

Arb.

Sire, this clemency—

Bel. (interrupting him). Is worthy of yourself; and, although innocent,

We thank——

Sar. Priest! keep your thanksgivings for Belus; His offspring needs none.

Bel. But being innocent——

Sar. Be silent.—Guilt is loud. If ye are loyal, Ye are injured men, and should be sad, not grateful.

Bel. So we should be, were justice always done By earthly power omnipotent; but innocence Must oft receive her right as a mere favour.

Sar. That's a good sentence for a homily, Though not for this occasion. Prithee keep it To plead thy sovereign's cause before his people.

Bel. I trust there is no cause.

Sar. No cause, perhaps;

But many causers:—if ye meet with such In the exercise of your inquisitive function On earth, or should you read of it in heaven In some mysterious twinkle of the stars, Which are your chronicles, I pray you note, That there are worse things betwixt earth and heaven Than him who ruleth many and slays none; And, hating not himself, yet loves his fellows Enough to spare even those who would not spare him Were they once masters— but that's doubtful. Satraps! Your swords and persons are at liberty To use them as ye will—but from this hour I have no call for either. Salemenes! Follow me.

[*Exeunt SARDANAPALUS, SALEMENES, and the Train, &c., leaving ARBACES and BELESES.*]

Arb. Beleses!

Bel. Now, what think you?

Arb. That we are lost.

Bel. That we have won the kingdom.

Arb. What? thus suspected—with the sword slung o'er us

But by a single hair, and that still wavering, To be blown down by his impenous breath Which spared us—why, I know not.

Bel. Seek not why;

But let us profit by the interval.

The hour is still our own—our power the same—
The night the same we destined. He hath changed
Nothing except our ignorance of all
Suspicion into such a certainty
As must make madness of delay.

Arb. And yet——

Bel. What, doubting still?

Arb. He spared our lives, nay, more,
Saved them from Salemenes.

Bel. And how long
Will he so spare? till the first drunken minute.

Arb. Or sober, rather. Yet he did it nobly;
Gave royally what we had forfeited
Basely——

Bel. Say bravely.

Arb. Somewhat of both, perhaps,
But it has touch'd me, and, whate'er betide,
I will no further on.

Bel. And lose the world!

Arb. Lose anything except my own esteem.

Bel. I blush that we should owe our lives to such
A king of distaffs!

Arb. But no less we owe them;
And I should blush far more to take the grantor's!

Bel. Thou may'st endure whate'er thou wilt—the stars
Have written otherwise.

Arb. Though they came down,
And marshall'd me the way in all their brightness,
I would not follow.

Bel. This is weakness—worse
Than a scared beldam's dreaming of the dead,
And waking in the dark.—Go to—go to.

Arb. Methought he look'd like Nimrod as he spoke,
Even as the proud imperial statue stands
Looking the monarch of the kings around it,
And sways, while they but ornament, the temple.

Bel. I told you that you had too much deposed him,
And that there was some royalty within him—
What then? he is the nobler foe.

Arb. But we
The meaner.—Would he had not spared us!

Bel. So—
Wouldst thou be sacrificed thus readily?

Arb. No—but it had been better to have died
Than live ungrateful.

Bel. Oh, the souls of some men !
Thou wouldst digest what some call treason, and
Fools treachery—and, behold, upon the sudden,
Because for something or for nothing, this
Rash reveller steps, ostentatiously,
'Twixt thee and Salemenes, thou art turn'd
Into—what shall I say?—Sardanapalus !
I know no name more ignominious.

Arb. But
An hour ago, who dared to term me such
Had held his life but lightly—as it is,
I must forgive you, even as he forgave us—
Semiramis herself would not have done it.

Bel. No—the queen liked no sharers of the kingdom,
Not even a husband.

Arb. I must serve him truly——

Bel. And humbly ?

Arb. No, sir, proudly—being honest.
I shall be nearer thrones than you to heaven ;
And if not quite so haughty, yet more lofty.
You may do your own deeming—you have codes,
And mysteries, and corollaries of
Right and wrong, which I lack for my direction,
And must pursue but what a plain heart teaches.
And now you know me.

Bel. Have you finish'd ?

Arb. Yes—
With you.

Bel. And would, perhaps, betray as well
As quit me ?

Arb. That's a sacerdotal thought
And not a soldier's.

Bel. Be it what you will—
Truce with these wranglings, and but hear me.

Arb. No—
There is more peril in your subtle spirit
Than in a phalanx.

Bel. If it must be so—
I'll on alone.

Arb. Alone !

Bel. Thrones hold but one.

Arb. But this is fill'd.

Bel. With worse than vacancy—
A despised monarch. Look to it, Arbaces :
I have still aided, cherish'd, loved, and urged you ;
Was willing even to serve you, in the hope
To serve and save Assyria. Heaven itself
Seem'd to consent, and all events were friendly
Even to the last, till that your spirit shrunk
Into a shallow softness ; but now, rather
Than see my country languish, I will be
Her saviour or the victim of her tyrant,
Or one or both, for sometimes both are one ;
And if I win, Arbaces is my servant.

Arb. Your servant !

Bel. Why not ? better than be slave,
The *paraon'd* slave of *she* Sardanapalus !

Enter PANIA.

Pan. My lords, I bear an order from the king.

Arb. It is obey'd ere spoken.

Bel. Notwithstanding,
Let's hear it.

Pan. Forthwith, on this very night,
Repair to your respective satrapies
Of Babylon and Media.

Bel. With our troops ?

Pan. My order is unto the satraps and
Their household train.

Arb. But——

Bel. It must be obey'd :
Say, we depart.

Pan. My order is to see you
Depart, and not to bear your answer.

Bel. (aside). Ay !
Well, sir, we will accompany you hence.

Pan. I will retire to marshal forth the guard
Of honour which befits your rank, and wait
Your leisure, so that it the hour exceeds not.

[*Exit PANIA.*

Bel. Now then obey !

Arb. Doubtless.

Bel. Yes, to the gates

That grate the palace, which is now our prison—
No further.

Arb. Thou hast harp'd the truth indeed !
The realm itself, in all its wide extension,
Yawns dungeons at each step for thee and me.

Bel. Graves !

Arb. If I thought so, this good sword should dig
One more than mine.

Bel. It shall have work enough.
Let me hope better than thou augurest ;
At present, let us hence as best we may.
Thou dost agree with me in understanding
This order as a sentence ?

Arb. Why, what other
Interpretation should it bear ? it is
The very policy of orient monarchs—
Pardon and poison—favours and a sword—
A distant voyage, and an eternal sleep.
How many satraps in his father's time—
For he I own is, or at least *was*, bloodless—

Bel. But *will* not, *can* not be so now.

Arb. I doubt it.
How many satraps have I seen set out
In his sire's day for mighty vice-royalties,
Whose tombs are on their path ! I know not how,
But they all sicken'd by the way, it was
So long and heavy.

Bel. Let us but regain
The free air of the city, and we'll shorten
The journey.

Arb. 'T will be shorten'd at the gates,
It may be.

Bel. No ; they hardly will risk that.
They mean us to die privately, but not
Within the palace or the city walls,
Where we are known, and may have partisans :
If they had meant to slay us here, we were
No longer with the living. Let us hence.

Arb. If I but thought he did not mean my life—

Bel. Fool ! hence—what else should despotism alarm'd
Mean ? Let us but rejoin our troops, and march.

Arb. Towards our provinces ?

Bel. No ; towards your kingdom.

There's time, there's heart, and hope, and power, and means,

Which their half measures leave us in full scope.—

Away!

Arb. And I even yet repenting must
Relapse to guilt!

Bel. Self-defence is a virtue,
Sole bulwark of all right. Away, I say!
Let's leave this place, the air grows thick and choking,
And the walls have a scent of night-shade—hence!
Let us not leave them time for further council.

Our quick departure proves our civic zeal;
Our quick departure hinders our good escort,
The worthy Pania, from anticipating
The orders of some parasangs from hence:
Nay, there's no other choice, but—hence, I say.

[Exit with ARBACES, who follows reluctantly.]

Enter SARDANAPALUS and SALEMENES.

Sar. Well, all is remedied, and without bloodshed,
That worst of mockeries of a remedy;
We are now secure by these men's exile.

Sal. Yes,
As he who treads on flowers is from the adder
Twined round their roots.

Sar. Why, what wouldst have me do?

Sal. Undo what you have done.

Sar. Revoke my pardon?

Sal. Replace the crown now tottering on your temples.

Sar. That were tyrannical.

Sal. But sure.

Sar. We are so.
What danger can they work upon the frontier?

Sal. They are not there yet—never should they be so,
Were I well listen'd to.

Sar. Nay, I *have* listen'd
Impartially to thee—why not to them?

Sal. You may know that hereafter; as it is,
I take my leave to order forth the guard.

Sar. And you will join us at the banquet?

Sal. Sire,
Dispense with me—I am no wassailer:
Command me in all service save the Bacchant's.

Sar. Nay, but 't is fit to revel now and then.

Sal. And fit that some should watch for those who revel
Too oft. Am I permitted to depart?

Sar. Yes——Stay a moment, my good Salemenes,
My brother, my best subject, better prince
Than I am king. You should have been the monarch,
And I—I know not what, and care not; but
Think not I am insensible to all
Thine honest wisdom, and thy rough yet kind,
Though oft reproving, sufferance of my follies.
If I have spared these men against thy counsel,
That is, their lives—it is not that I doubt
The advice was sound; but, let them live: we will not
Cavil about their lives—so let them mend them.
Their banishment will leave me still sound sleep,
Which their death had not left me.

Sal. Thus you run
The risk to sleep for ever, to save traitors—
A moment's pang now changed for years of crime.
Still let them be made quiet.

Sar. Tempt me not;
My word is past.

Sal. But it may be recall'd.

Sar. 'T is royal.

Sal. And should therefore be decisive.
This half indulgence of an exile serves
But to provoke—a pardon should be full,
Or it is none.

Sar. And who persuaded me
After I had repeal'd them, or at least
Only dismiss'd them from our presence, who
Urged me to send them to their satrapies?

Sal. True; that I had forgotten; that is, sire,
If they e'er reach'd their satrapies—why, then,
Reprove me more for my advice.

Sar. And, if
They do not reach them—look to it!—in safety.
In safety, mark me—and security—
Look to thine own.

Sal. Permit me to depart,
Their safety shall be cared for.

Sar. Get thee hence, then;
And, prithee, think more gently of thy brother.

Sal. Sire, I shall ever duly serve my sovereign.

[*Exit* SALEMENES.]

Sar. (solus). That man is of a temper too severe;
Hard but as lofty as the rock, and free
From all the taints of common earth—while I
Am softer clay, impregnated with flowers:
But as our mould is, must the produce be.
If I have err'd this time, 't is on the side
Where error sits most lightly on that sense,
I know not what to call it; but it reckons
With me oftentimes for pain, and sometimes pleasure;
A spirit which seems placed about my heart
To count its throbs, not quicken them, and ask
Questions which mortal never dared to ask me,
Nor Baal, though an oracular deity—
Albeit his marble face majestic
Frowns as the shadows of the evening dim
His brows to changed expression, till at times
I think the statue looks in act to speak.
Away with these vain thoughts, I will be joyous—
And here comes Joy's true herald.

Enter MYRRHA.

Myr. King! the sky
Is overcast, and musters muttering thunder,
In clouds that seem approaching fast, and show
In forked flashes a commanding tempest.
Will you then quit the palace?

Sar. Tempest, say'st thou?

Myr. Ay, my good lord.

Sar. For my own part, I should be
Not ill content to vary the smooth scene,
And watch the warring elements; but this
Would little suit the silken garments and
Smooth faces of our festive friends. Say, Myrrha,
Art thou of those who dread the roar of clouds?

Myr. In my own country we respect their voices
As auguries of Jove.

Sar. Jove!—ay, your Baal—
Ours also has a property in thunder,
And ever and anon some falling bolt
Proves his divinity,—and yet sometimes
Strikes his own altars.

Myr. That were a dread omen.

Sar. Yes—for the priests. Well, we will not go forth
Beyond the palace walls to-night, but make
Our feast within.

Myr. Now, Jove be praised ! that he
Hath heard the prayer thou wouldst not hear. The gods
Are kinder to thee than thou to thyself,
And flash this storm between thee and thy foes,
To shield thee from them.

Sar. Child, if there be peril,
Methinks it is the same within these walls
As on the river's brink.

Myr. Not so ; these walls
Are high and strong, and guarded. Treason has
To penetrate through many a winding way,
And massy portal ; but in the pavilion
There is no bulwark.

Sar. No, nor in the palace,
Nor in the fortress, nor upon the top
Of cloud-fenced Caucasus, where the eagle sits
Nested in pathless clefts, if treachery be :
Even as the arrow finds the airy king,
The steel will reach the earthly. But be calm ;
The men, or innocent or guilty, are
Banish'd, and far upon their way.

Myr. They live, then ?

Sar. So sanguinary ? *Thou !*

Myr. I would not shrink
From just infliction of due punishment
On those who seek your life : were 't otherwise,
I should not merit mine. Besides, you heard
The princely Salemenes.

Sar. This is strange ;
The gentle and the austere are both against me,
And urge me to revenge.

Myr. 'Tis a Greek virtue.

Sar. But not a kingly one—I'll none on't ; or
If ever I indulge in't, it shall be
With kings—my equals.

Myr. These men sought to be so.

Sar. Myrrha, this is too feminine, and springs
From fear——

Myr. For you.

Sar. No matter, still 't is fear.
I have observed your sex, once roused to wrath,
Are timidly vindictive to a pitch
Of perseverance, which I would not copy.
I thought you were exempt from this, as from
The childish helplessness of Asian women.

Myr. My lord, I am no boaster of my love,
Nor of my attributes ; I have shared your splendour,
And will partake your fortunes. You may live
To find one slave more true than subject myriads :
But this the gods avert ! I am content
To be beloved on trust for what I feel,
Rather than prove it to you in your griefs,
Which might not yield to any cares of mine.

Sar. Grief cannot come where perfect love exists
Except to heighten it, and vanish from
That which it could not scare away. Let's in—
The hour approaches, and we must prepare
To meet the invited guests who grace our feast.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The Hall of the Palace illuminated—SARDANAPALUS and his Guests at Table.—A Storm without, and Thunder occasionally heard during the Banquet.*

Sar. Fill full ! why this is as it should be : here
Is my true realm, amidst bright eyes and faces
Happy as fair ! Here sorrow cannot reach.

Zam. Nor elsewhere—where the king is, pleasure
sparkles.

Sar. Is not this better now than Nimrod's huntings,
Or my wild grandam's chase in search of kingdoms
She could not keep when conquer'd ?

All. Mighty though
They were, as all thy royal line have been,
Yet none of these who went before have reach'd
The acmé of Sardanapalus, who
Has placed his joy in peace—the sole true glory.

Sar. And pleasure, good Altada, to which glory
Is but the path. What is it that we seek ?

Enjoyment! We have cut the way short to it,
And not gone tracking it through human ashes,
Making a grave with every footstep.

Zam. No;

All hearts are happy, and all voices bless
The king of peace, who holds a world in jubilee.

Sar. Art sure of that? I have heard otherwise;
Some say that there be traitors.

Zam. Traitors they
Who dare to say so!—'T is impossible.
What cause?

Sar. What cause? true,—fill the goblet up;
We will not think of them: there are none such,
Or if there be, they are gone.

Alt. Guests, to my pledge!
Down on your knees, and drink a measure to
The safety of the king—the monarch, say I?
The god Sardanapalus!

[*JAMES and the Guests kneel, and exclaim—*
Mightier than
His father Baal, the god Sardanapalus!

[*It thunders as they kneel; some start up in confusion.*

Zam. Why do you rise, my friends? in that strong peal
His father gods consented.

Myr. Menaced, rather.
King, wilt thou bear this mad impiety?

Sar. Impiety!—nay, if the sires who reign'd
Before me can be gods, I'll not disgrace
Their lineage. But arise, my pious friends;
Hoard your devotion for the thunderer there;
I seek but to be loved, not worshipp'd.

Alt. Both—
Both you must ever be by all true subjects.

Sar. Methinks the thunders still increase: it is
An awful night.

Myr. Oh yes, for those who have
No palace to protect their worshippers.

Sar. That's true, my Myrrha; and could I convert
My realm to one wide shelter for the wretched,
I'd do it.

Myr. Thou'rt no god, then, not to be
Able to work a will so good and general,
As thy wish would imply.

Sar. And your gods, then,
Who can, and do not?

Myr. Do not speak of that,
Lest we provoke them.

Sar. True, they love not censure
Better than mortals. Friends, a thought has struck me:
Were there no temples, would there, think ye, be
Air worshippers? that is, when it is angry,
And pelting as even now.

Myr. The Persian prays
Upon his mountain.

Sar. Yes, when the sun shines.
Myr. And I would ask if this your palace were
Unroof'd and desolate, how many flatterers
Would lick the dust in which the king lay low?

Alt. The fair Ionian is too sarcastic
Upon a nation whom she knows not well;
The Assyrians know no pleasure but their king's,
And homage is their pride.

Sar. Nay, pardon, guests,
The fair Greek's readiness of speech.

Alt. Pardon! sire:
We honour her of all things next to thee.
Hark! what was that?

Zam. That! nothing but the jar
Of distant portals shaken by the wind.

Alt. It sounded like the clash of—hark again!

Zam. The big rain pattering on the roof.

Sar. No more.
Myrrha, my love, hast thou thy shell in order?
Sing me a song of Sappho, her thou know'st,
Who in thy country threw——

*Enter PANIA with his sword and garments bloody and
disordered. The guests rise in confusion.*

Pan. (to the Guards). Look to the portals;
And with your best speed to the walls without.
Your arms! 'To arms! The king's in danger. Monarch,
Excuse this haste—'t is faith.

Sar. Speak on.

Pan. It is
As Salemenes fear'd; the faithless satraps— [good Pania.

Sar. You are wounded—give some wine. Take breath,

Pan. 'Tis nothing—a mere flesh wound. I am worn
More with speed to warn my sovereign,
Than hurt in his defence.

Myr. Well, sir, the rebels?

Pan. Soon as Arbaces and Beleses reach'd
Their stations in the city, they refused
To march; and on my attempt to use the power
Which I was delegated with, they call'd
Upon their troops, who rose in fierce defiance.

Myr. All?

Pan. Too many.

Sar. Spare not of thy free speech,
To spare mine ears the truth.

Pan. My own slight guard
Were faithful, and what's left of it is still so.

Myr. And are these all the force still faithful?

Pan. No—

The Bactrians, now led on by Salemenes,
Who even then was on his way, still urged
By strong suspicion of the Median chiefs,
Are numerous, and make strong head against
The rebels, fighting inch by inch, and forming
An orb around the palace, where they mean
To centre all their force, and save the king.
(*He hesitates.*) I am charged to—

Myr. 'Tis no time for hesitation.

Pan. Prince Salemenes doth implore the king
To arm himself, although but for a moment,
And show himself unto the soldiers: his
Sole presence in this instance might do more
Than hosts can do in his behalf.

Sar. What, ho!
My armour there.

Myr. And wilt thou?

Sar. Will I not?

Ho, there!—but seek not for the buckler: 't is
Too heavy: a light cuirass and my sword.
Where are the rebels?

Pan. Scarce a furlong's length
From the outward wall the fiercest conflict rages.

Sar. Then I may charge on horseback. Sfero, ho!
Order my horse out.—There is space enough
Even in our courts, and by the outer gate,

To marshal half the horsemen of Arabia.

[*Exit SFERO for the armour.*]

Myr. How I do love thee!

Sar. I ne'er doubted it.

Myr. But now I know thee.

Sar. (to his Attendant). Bring down my spear too.—
Where's Salemenes?

Pan. Where a soldier should be,
In the thick of the fight.

Sar. Then hasten to him——Is
The path still open, and communication
Left 'twixt the palace and the phalanx?

Pan. 'T was
When I late left him, and I have no fear:
Our troops were steady, and the phalanx form'd.

Sar. Tell him to spare his person for the present,
And that I will not spare my own—and say,
I come.

Pan. There's victory in the very word.

[*Exit PANIA.*]

Sar. Altada—Zames—forth, and arm ye! There
Is all in readiness in the armoury.
See that the women are bestow'd in safety
In the remote apartments: let a guard
Be set before them, with strict charge to quit
The post but with their lives—command it, Zames.
Altada, arm yourself, and return here;
Your post is near our person.

[*Exeunt ZAMES, ALTADA, and all save MYRRHA.*]

Enter SFERO and others with the King's Arms, &c.

Sfe. King! your armour.

Sar. (arming himself). Give me the cuirass—so: my
baldric; now
My sword: I had forgot the helm—where is it?
That's well—no, 't is too heavy: you mistake, too—
It was not this I meant, but that which bears
A diadem around it.

Sfe. Sire, I deem'd
That too conspicuous from the precious stones
To risk your sacred brow beneath—and trust me,
This is of better metal, though less rich.

Sar. You deem'd! Are you too turn'd a rebel?
Fellow!

Your part is to obey: return, and—no—
It is too late—I will go forth without it.

Sfe. At least, wear this.

Sar. Wear Caucasus! why, 't is
A mountain on my temples.

Sfe. Sire, the meanest
Soldier goes not forth thus exposed to battle.
All men will recognise you—for the storm
Has ceased, and the moon breaks forth in her brightness.

Sar. I go forth to be recognised, and thus
Shall be so sooner. Now—my spear! I'm arm'd.
[*In going stops short, and turns to SFERO.*
Sfero—I had forgotten—bring the mirror.

Sfe. The mirror, sire?

Sar. Yes, sir, of polish'd brass,
Brought from the spoils of India—but be speedy.
[*Exit SFERO.*

Sar. Myrrha, retire unto a place of safety.
Why went you not forth with the other damsels?

Myr. Because my place is here.

Sar. And when I am gone——

Myr. I follow.

Sar. You! to battle?

Myr. If it were so,
'T were not the first Greek girl had trod the path.
I will await here your *return*.

Sar. The place
Is spacious, and the first to be sought out,
If they prevail; and, if it be so,
And I return not——

Myr. Still we meet again.

Sar. How?

Myr. In the spot where all must meet at last—
In Hades! if there be, as I believe,
A shore beyond the Styx; and if there be not,
In ashes.

Sar. Darest thou so much?

Myr. I dare all things
Except survive what I have loved, to be
A rebel's booty: forth, and do your bravest.

Re-enter SFERO with the mirror;

Sar. (looking at himself). This cuirass fits me well, the baldric better,
And the helm not at all. Methinks I seem
[Flings away the helmet after trying it again.]
Passing well in these toys; and now to prove them.
Altada! Where's Altada?

Sfe. Waiting, sire,
Without: he has your shield in readiness.

Sar. True; I forgot he is my shield-bearer
By right of blood, derived from age to age.
Myrrha, embrace me; yet once more—once more—
Love me, whate'er betide. My chiefest glory
Shall be to make me worthier of your love.

Myr. Go forth, and conquer!

[Exeunt SADANAPALUS and SFERO.]

Now, I am alone,

All are gone forth, and of that all how few
Perhaps return! Let him but vanquish, and
Me perish! If he vanquish not, I perish;
For I will not outlive him. He has wound
About my heart, I know not how nor why.
Not for that he is king; for now his kingdom
Rocks underneath his throne, and the earth yawns
To yield him no more of it than a grave;
And yet I love him more. Oh, mighty Jove!
Forgive this monstrous love for a barbarian,
Who knows not of Olympus! yes, I love him
Now, now, far more than—Hark—to the war shout!
Methinks it nears. If it should be so,

[She draws forth a small vial.]

This cunning Colchian poison, which my father
Learn'd to compound on Euxine shores, and taught me
How to preserve, shall free me! It had freed me
Long ere this hour, but that I loved, until
I half forgot I was a slave:—where all
Are slaves save one, and proud of servitude,
So they are served in turn by something lower
In the degree of bondage, we forget
That shackles worn like ornaments no less
Are chains. Again that shout! and now the clash
Of arms—and now—and now—

Enter ALTADA.

Alt. Ho, Sfero, ho !

Myr. He is not here ; what wouldst thou with him ?

How

Goes on the conflict ?

Alt. Dubiously and fiercely.

Myr. And the king ?

Alt. Like a king. I must find Sfero,

And bring him a new spear and his own helmet.

He fights till now bare-headed, and by far

Too much exposed. The soldiers knew his face,

And the foe too ; and in the moon's broad light,

His silk tiara and his flowing hair

Make him a mark too royal. Every arrow

Is pointed at the fair hair and fair features,

And the broad fillet which crowns both.

Myr. Ye gods,

Who fulminate o'er my father's land, protect him !

Were you sent by the king ?

Alt. By Salemenes,

Who sent me privily upon this charge,

Without the knowledge of the careless sovereign.

The king ! the king fights as he revels ! ho !

What, Sfero ! I will seek the armoury—

He must be there.

[*Exit ALTADA.*

Myr. 'T is no dishonour—no—

'T is no dishonour to have loved this man.

I almost wish now, what I never wish'd

Before, that he were Grecian. If Alcides

Were shamed in wearing Lydian Omphale's

She-garb, and wielding her vile distaff ; surely

He, who springs up a Hercules at once,

Nursed in effeminate arts from youth to manhood,

And rushes from the banquet to the battle.

As though it were a bed of love, deserves

That a Greek girl should be his paramour,

And a Greek bard his minstrel, a Greek tomb

His monument. How goes the strife, sir !

Enter an Officer.

Officer.

Lost,

Lost almost past recovery. Zames ! Where

Is Zames ?

Myr. Posted with the guard appointed
To watch before the apartment of the women.

[*Exit Officer.*]

Myr. (sola). He's gone ; and told no more than that
all's lost !

What need have I to know more ? In those words
Those little words, a kingdom and a king,
A line of thirteen ages, and the lives
Of thousands, and the fortune of all left
With life, are merged ; and I, too, with the great,
Like a small bubble breaking with the wave
Which bore it, shall be nothing. At the least,
My fate is in my keeping : no proud victor
Shall count me with his spoils.

Enter PANIA.

Pan. Away with me,
Myrrha, without delay ; we must not lose
A moment—all that's left us now.

Myr. The king ?

Pan. Sent me here to conduct you hence, beyond
The river, by a secret passage.

Myr. Then
He lives—

Pan. And charged me to secure your life,
And beg you to live on for his sake, till
He can rejoin you.

Myr. Will he then give way ?

Pan. Not till the last. Still, still he does whate'er
Despair can do ; and step by step disputes
The very palace.

Myr. They are here, then :—ay,
Their shouts come ringing through the ancient halls,
Never profaned by rebel echoes till
This fatal night. Farewell, Assyria's line !
Farewell to all of Nimrod ! Even the name
Is now no more.

Pan. Away with me—away !

Myr. No : I'll die here !—Away, and tell your kin
I loved him to the last.

Enter SARDANAPALUS and SALEMENES with Soldiers. PANIA quits MYRRHA, and ranges himself with them.

Sar. Since it is thus,
We'll die where we were born—in our own halls.
Serry your ranks—stand firm. I have despatch'd
A trusty satrap for the guard of Zames,
All fresh and faithful; they'll be here anon.
All is not over.—Pania, look to Myrrha.

[PANIA returns towards MYRRHA.]

Sal. We have breathing time; yet once more charge,
my friends—
One for Assyria!

Sar. Rather say for Bactria!
My faithful Bactrians, I will henceforth be
King of your nation, and we'll hold together
This realm as province.

Sal. Hark! they come—they come.

Enter BELESES and ARBACES with the Rebels.

Arb. Set on, we have them in the toil. Charge!
charge!

Bel. On! on!—Heaven fights for us, and with us—
On!

[They charge the King and SALEMENES with their troops, who defend themselves till the arrival of ZAMES with the Guard before mentioned. The Rebels are then driven off, and pursued by SALEMENES, &c. As the King is going to join the pursuit, BELESES crosses him.]

Bel. Ho! tyrant—I will end this war.

Sar. Even so,
My warlike priest, and precious prophet, and
Grateful and trusty subject: yield, I pray thee.
I would reserve thee for a fitter doom,
Rather than dip my hands in holy blood:

Bel. Thine hour is come.

Sar. No, thine.—I've lately read,
Though but a young astrologer, the stars;
And ranging round the zodiac, found thy fate
In the sign of the Scorpion, which proclaims
That thou wilt now be crush'd.

Bel.

But not by thee.

[They fight; BELESES is wounded and disarmed.]

Sar. (raising his sword to despatch him, exclaims)—
Now call upon thy planets, will they shoot
From the sky to preserve their seer and credit?

[A party of Rebels enter and rescue BELESES. They assail the King, who, in turn, is rescued by a Party of his Soldiers, who drive the Rebels off.]

The villain was a prophet after all.
Upon them—ho! there—victory is ours.

[Exit in pursuit.]

Myr. (to Pan.). Pursue! Why stand'st thou here, and
leav'st the ranks

Of fellow-soldiers conquering without thee?

Pan. The king's command was not to quit thee.

Myr.

Me!

Think not of me—a single soldier's arm
Must not be wanting now. I ask no guard,
I need no guard: what, with a world at stake,
Keep watch upon a woman? Hence, I say,
Or thou art shamed! Nay, then, I will go forth,
A feeble female, 'midst their desperate strife,
And bid thee guard me *there*—where thou shouldst shield
Thy sovereign. *[Exit MYRRHA.]*

Pan. Yet stay, damsel!—She is gone.

If aught of ill betide her, better I
Had lost my life. Sardanapalus holds her
Far dearer than his kingdom, yet he fights
For that too; and can I do less than he,
Who never flash'd a scimitar till now?
Myrrha, return, and I obey you, though
In disobedience to the monarch.

[Exit PANIA.]

Enter ALTADA and SFERO by an opposite door.

Alt.

Myrrha!

What, gone? yet she was here when the fight raged,
And Pania also. Can aught have befallen them?

Sfe. I saw both safe, when late the rebels fled;
They probably are but retired to make
Their way back to the harem.

Alt.

If the king
Prove victor, as it seems even now he must,
And miss his own Ionian, we are doom'd
To worse than captive rebels.

Sfe.

Let us trace them;

She cannot be fled far ; and, found, she makes
A richer prize to our soft sovereign
Than his recover'd kingdom.

Alt. Baal himself
Ne'er fought more fiercely to win empire, than
His silken son to save it : he defies
All augury of foes or friends ; and like
The close and sultry summer's day, which bodes
A twilight tempest, bursts forth in such thunder
As sweeps the air and deluges the earth.
The man's inscrutable.

Sfe. Not more than others.
All are the sons of circumstance : away—
Let's seek the slave out, or prepare to be
Tortured for his infatuation, and
Condemn'd without a crime.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter SALEMENES and Soldiers, &c.

Sal. The triumph is
Flattering : they are beaten backward from the palace,
And we have open'd regular access
To the troops station'd on the other side
Euphrates, who may still be true ; nay, must be,
When they hear of our victory.—But where
Is the chief victor ? where's the king ?

Enter SARDANAPALUS, cum suis, &c. and MYRRHA.

Sar. Here, brother.

Sal. Unhurt, I hope.

Sar. Not quite ; but let it pass.
We've clear'd the palace——

Sal. And I trust the city.
Our numbers gather ; and I've order'd onward
A cloud of Parthians, hitherto reserved,
All fresh and fiery, to be pour'd upon them
In their retreat, which soon will be a flight.

Sar. It is already, or at least they march'd
Faster than I could follow with my Bactrians,
Who spared no speed. I am spent : give me a seat.

Sal. There stands the throne, sire.

Sar. 'Tis no place to rest on,
For mind nor body : let me have a couch,
[*They place a seat.*]

A peasant's stool, I care not what : so—now
I breathe more freely.

Sal. This great hour has proved
The brightest and most glorious of your life.

Sar. And the most tiresome. Where's my cupbearer?
Bring me some water.

Sal. (smiling). 'Tis the first time he
Ever had such an order : even I,
Your most austere of counsellors, would now
Suggest a purpler beverage.

Sar. Blood—doubtless.
But there's enough of that shed ; as for wine,
I have learn'd to-night the price of the pure element :
Thrice have I drank of it, and thrice renew'd,
With greater strength than the grape ever gave me,
My charge upon the rebels. Where's the soldier
Who gave me water in his helmet?

One of the Guards. Slain, sire !
An arrow pierced his brain, while, scattering
The last drops from his helm, he stood in act
To place it on his brows.

Sar. Slain ! unrewarded !
And slain to serve my thirst : that's hard, poor slave !
Had he but lived, I would have gorged him with
Gold : all the gold of earth could ne'er repay
The pleasure of that draught ; for I was parch'd
As I am now. [*They bring water—he drinks.*]

I live again—from henceforth
The goblet I reserve for hours of love,
But war on water.

Sal. And that bandage, sire,
Which girds your arm ?

Sar. A scratch from brave Beereses.

Myr. Oh ! he is wounded !

Sar. Not too much of that ;
And yet it feels a little stiff and painful,
Now I am cooler.

Myr. You have bound it with——

Sar. The fillet of my diadem : the first time
That ornament was ever aught to me
Save an encumbrance.

Myr. (to the Attendants). Summon speedily

A leech of the most skilful : pray, retire :
I will unbind your wound and tend it.

Sar.

Do so,

For now it throbs sufficiently : but what
Know'st thou of wounds ? yet wherefore do I ask ?
Know'st thou, my brother, where I lighted on
This minion ?

Sal. Herding with the other females,
Like frighten'd antelopes.

Sar.

No : like the dam

Of the young lion, femininely raging
(And femininely meaneth furiously,
Because all passions in excess are female)
Against the hunter flying with her cub,
She urged on with her voice and gesture, and
Her floating hair and flashing eyes, the soldiers,
In the pursuit.

Sal.

Indeed !

Sar.

You see, this night

Made warriors of more than me. I paused
To look upon her, and her kindled cheek ;
Her large black eyes, that flash'd through her long hair
As it stream'd o'er her ; her blue veins that rose
Along her most transparent brow ; her nostril
Dilated from its symmetry ; her lips
Apart ; her voice that clove through all the din,
As a lute pierceth through the cymbals' clash,
Jarr'd but not drown'd by the loud brattling ; her
Waved arms, more dazzling with their own born whiteness
Than the steel her hand held, which she caught up
From a dead soldier's grasp ;—all these things made
Her seem unto the troops a prophetess
Of victory, or Victory herself,
Come down to hail us hers.

Sal. (aside).

This is too much.

Again the love-fit's on him, and all's lost,
Unless we turn his thoughts. (*Aloud.*) But pray thee, sire,
Think of your wound—you said even now 't was painful.

Sar. That's true, too ; but I must not think of it.

Sal. I have look'd to all things needful, and will now
Receive reports of progress made in such
Orders as I had given, and then return
To hear your further pleasure.

Sar. Be it so.

Sal. (*in retiring*). Myrrha!

Myr. Prince!

Sal. You have shown a soul to-night,
Which, were he not my sister's lord——But now
I have no time : thou lov'st the king?

Myr. I love

Sardanapalus.

Sal. But wouldst have him king still?

Myr. I would not have him less than what he should be.

Sal. Well then, to have him king, and yours, and all
He should, or should not be ; to have him *live*,
Let him not sink back into luxury.

You have more power upon his spirit than
Wisdom within these walls, or fierce rebellion
Raging without : look well that he relapse not.

Myr. There needed not the voice of Salemenes
To urge me on to this : I will not fail.
All that a woman's weakness can——

Sal. Is power

Omnipotent o'er such a heart as his :

Exert it wisely.

[*Exit SALEMENES.*

Sar. Myrrha! what, at whispers
With my stern brother? I shall soon be jealous,

Myr. (*smiling*). You have cause, sire ; for on the earth
there breathes not

A man more worthy of a woman's love,
A soldier's trust, a subject's reverence,
A king's esteem—the whole world's admiration!

Sar. Praise him, but not so warmly. I must not
Hear those sweet lips grow eloquent in aught
That throws me into shade ; yet you speak truth.

Myr. And now retire, to have your wound look'd to.
Pray lean on me.

Sar. Yes, love ! but not from pain.

[*Excunt omnes.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—SARDANAPALUS *discovered sleeping upon a Couch, and occasionally disturbed in his slumbers, with MYRRHA watching.*

Myr. (sola, gazing). I have stolen upon his rest, if rest it be,

Which thus convulses slumber : shall I wake him ?
 No, he seems calmer. Oh, thou God of Quiet !
 Whose reign is o'er seal'd eyelids and soft dreams,
 Or deep, deep sleep, so as to be unfathom'd,
 Look like thy brother, Death.—so still, so stirless—
 For then we are happiest, as it may be, we
 Are happiest of all within the realm
 Of thy stern, silent, and unawakening twin.
 Again he moves—again the play of pain
 Shoots o'er his features, as the sudden gust
 Crisps the reluctant lake that lay so calm
 Beneath the mountain shadow ; or the blast
 Ruffles the autumn leaves, that dropping cling
 Faintly and motionless to their loved boughs,
 I must awake him—yet not yet ; who knows
 From what I rouse him ? It seems pain ; but if
 I quicken him to heavier pain ? The fever
 Of this tumultuous night, the grief too of
 His wound, though slight, may cause all this, and shake
 Me more to see than him to suffer. No :
 Let Nature use her own maternal means,
 And I await to second, not disturb her.

Sar. (awakening). Not so—although ye multiplied the stars,
 And gave them to me as a realm to share
 From you and with you ! I would not so purchase
 The empire of eternity. Hence—hence—
 Old hunter of the earliest brutes ! and ye,
 Who hunted fellow-creatures as if brutes !
 Once bloody mortals—and now bloodier idols,
 If your priests lie not ! And thou, ghastly beldame !
 Dripping with dusky gore, and trampling on
 The carcasses of Inde—away ! away !
 Where am I ? Where the spectres ? Where—No—that
 Is no false phantom : I should know it 'midst

All that the dead dare gloomily raise up
From their black gulf to daunt the living. Myrrha!

Myr. Alas! thou art pale, and on thy brow the drops
Gather like night dew. My beloved, hush—
Calm thee. Thy speech seems of another world,
And thou art lord of this. Be of good cheer;
All will go well.

Sar. Thy hand—so—'t is thy hand;
'T is flesh; grasp—clasp—yet closer, till I feel
Myself that which I was.

Myr. At least know me
For what I am, and ever must be—thine.

Sar. I know it now. I know this life again.
Ah, Myrrha! I have been where we shall be.

Myr. My lord!

Sar. I've been i' the grave—where worms are lords,
And kings are——But I did not deem it so;
I thought 't was nothing.

Myr. So it is; except
Unto the timid, who anticipate
That which may never be.

Sar. Oh, Myrrha! if
Sleep shows such things, what may not death disclose?

Myr. I know no evil death can show, which life
Has not already shown to those who live
Embodied longest. If there be indeed
A shore where mind survives, 't will be as mind,
All unincorporate: or if there flits
A shadow of this cumbrous clog of clay,
Which stalks, methinks, between our souls and heaven,
And fetters us to earth.—at least the phantom,
Whate'er it have to fear, will not fear death.

Sar. I fear it not; but I have felt—have seen—
A legion of the dead.

Myr. And so have I.
The dust we tread upon was once alive,
And wretched. But proceed: what hast thou seen?
Speak it, 't will lighten thy dimm'd mind.

Sar. Methought——

Myr. Yet pause, thou art tired—in pain—exhausted; all
Which can impair both strength and spirit: seek
Rather to sleep again.

Sar. Not now—I would not

Dream, though I know it now to be a dream,
What I have dreamt:—and canst thou bear to hear it?

Myr. I can bear all things, dreams of life or death,
Which I participate with you in semblance
Or full reality.

Sar. And this look'd real,
I tell you: after that these eyes were open,
I saw them in their flight—for then they fled.

Myr. Say on.

Sar. I saw, that is, I dream'd myself
Here—here—even where we are, guests as we were,
Myself a host that deem'd himself but guest,
Willing to equal all in social freedom;
But, on my right hand and my left, instead
Of thee and Zames, and our custom'd meeting,
Was ranged on my left hand a haughty, dark,
And deadly face; I could not recognise it,
Yet I had seen it, though I knew not where;
The features were a giant's, and the eye
Was still, yet lighted; his long locks curl'd down
On his vast bust, whence a huge quiver rose
With shaft-heads feather'd from the eagle's wing,
That peep'd up bristling through his serpent hair.
I invited him to fill the cup which stood
Between us, but he answer'd not; I fill'd it
He took it not, but stared upon me, till
I trembled at the fix'd glare of his eye:
I frown'd upon him as a king should frown;
He frown'd not in his turn, but look'd upon me
With the same aspect, which appall'd me more,
Because it changed not; and I turn'd for refuge
To milder guests, and sought them on the right,
Where thou wert wont to be. But—— [*He pauses.*

Myr.

What instead?

Sar. In thy own chair—thy own place in the banquet—
I sought thy sweet face in the circle—but
Instead—a grey-hair'd, wither'd, bloody-eyed,
And bloody-handed, ghastly, ghostly thing,
Female in garb, and crown'd upon the brow,
Furrow'd with years, yet sneering with the passion
Of vengeance, leering too with that of lust,
Sate:—my veins curdled.

Myr.

Is this all?

Sar. Upon
Her right hand—her lank, bird-like right hand—stood
A goblet, bubbling o'er with blood ; and on
Her left, another, fill'd with—what I saw not,
But turn'd from it and her. But all along
The table sate a range of crowned wretches,
Of various aspects, but of one expression.

Myr. And felt you not this a mere vision?

Sar. No :
It was so palpable, I could have touch'd them.
I turn'd from one face to another, in
The hope to find at last one which I knew
Ere I saw theirs : but no—all turn'd upon me,
And stared, but neither ate nor drank, but stared,
Till I grew stone, as they seem'd half to be,
Yet breathing stone, for I felt life in them,
And life in me : there was a horrid kind
Of sympathy between us, as if they
Had lost a part of death to come to me,
And I the half of life to sit by them.
We were in an existence all apart
From heaven or earth—And rather let me see
Death all than such a being !

Myr. And the end?

Sar. At last I sate, marble, as they, when rose
The hunter and the crone ; and smiling on me—
Yes, the enlarged but noble aspect of
The hunter smiled upon me—I should say,
His lips, for his eyes moved not—and the woman's
Thin lips relax'd to something like a smile.
Both rose, and the crown'd figures on each hand
Rose also, as if aping their chief shades—
Mere mimics even in death—but I sate still :
A desperate courage crept through every limb,
And at the last I fear'd them not, but laugh'd
Full in their phantom faces. But then—then
The hunter laid his hand on mine : I took it,
And grasp'd it—but it melted from my own ;
While he too vanish'd, and left nothing but
The memory of a hero, for he look'd so.

Myr. And was : the ancestor of heroes, too,
And thine no less.

Sar.

Ay, Myrrha, but the woman,

The female who remain'd, she flew upon me,
 And burnt my lips up with her noisome kisses,
 And, flinging down the goblets on each hand,
 Methought their poisons flow'd around us, till
 Each form'd a hideous river. Still she clung;
 The other phantoms, like a row of statues,
 Stood dull as in our temples, but she still
 Embraced me, while I shrunk from her, as if,
 In lieu of her remote descendant, I
 Had been the son who slew her for her incest.
 Then—then—a chaos of all loathsome things
 Throng'd thick and shapeless: I was dead, yet feeling—
 Buried, and raised again—consumed by worms,
 Purged by the flames, and wither'd in the air!
 I can fix nothing further of my thoughts,
 Save that I long'd for thee, and sought for thee,
 In all these agonies,—and woke and found thee.

Myr. So shalt thou find me ever at thy side,
 Here and hereafter, if the last may be.
 But think not of these things—the mere creations
 Of late events, acting upon a frame
 Unused to toil, yet over-wrought by toil
 Such as might try the sternest.

Sar. I am better.
 Now that I see thee once more, what was seen
 Seems nothing.

Enter SALEMENES.

Sal. Is the king so soon awake?

Sar. Yes, brother, and I would I had not slept;
 For all the predecessors of our line
 Rose up, methought, to drag me down to them.
 My father was amongst them, too; but he,
 I know not why, kept from me, leaving me
 Between the hunter-founder of our race,
 And her, the homicide and husband-killer,
 Whom you call glorious.

Sal. So I term you also,
 Now you have shown a spirit like to hers.
 By day-break I propose that we set forth,
 And charge once more the rebel crew, who still
 Keep gathering head, repulsed, but not quite quell'd.

Sar. How wears the night?

Sal. There yet remain some hours
Of darkness : use them for your further rest.

Sar. No, not to-night, if 't is not gone : methought
I pass'd hours in that vision.

Myr. Scarcely one ;
I watch'd by you : it was a heavy hour,
But an hour only.

Sar. Let us then hold council ;
To-morrow we set forth.

Sal. But ere that time,
I had a grace to seek.

Sar. 'T is granted.

Sal. Hear it
Ere you reply too readily ; and 't is
For *your* ear only.

Myr. Prince, I take my leave. [*Exit MYRRHA.*]

Sal. That slave deserves her freedom.

Sar. Freedom only !
That slave deserves to share a throne.

Sal. Your patience—
'T is not yet vacant, and 't is of its partner
I come to speak with you.

Sar. How ! of the queen ?

Sal. Even so. I judg'd it fitting for their safety
That, ere the dawn, she sets forth with her children
For Paphlagonia, where our kinsman Cotta
Governs ; and there at all events secure
My nephews and your sons their lives, and with them
Their just pretensions to the crown in case——

Sar. I perish—as is probable : well thought—
Let them set forth with a sure escort.

Sal. That
Is all provided, and the galley ready
To drop down the Euphrates : but ere they
Depart, will you not see——

Sar. My sons ? It may
Unman my heart, and the poor boys will weep ;
And what can I reply to comfort them,
Save with some hollow hopes and ill-worn smiles ?
You know I cannot feign.

Sal. But you can feel !
At least, I trust so ; in a word, the queen
Requests to see you ere you part—for ever.

Sar. Unto what end? what purpose? I will grant
Aught—all that she can ask—but such a meeting.

Sal. You know, or ought to know, enough of women,
Since you have studied them so steadily,
That what they ask in aught that touches on
The heart, is dearer to their feelings or
Their fancy than the whole external world.
I think as you do of my sister's wish;
But 't was her wish—she is my sister—you
Her husband—will you grant it?

Sar. 'T will be useless :
But let her come.

Sal. I go. [Exit SALEMENES.

Sar. We have lived asunder
Too long to meet again—and *now* to meet!
Have I not cares enow, and pangs enow,
To bear alone, that we must mingle sorrows,
Who have ceased to mingle love?

Re-enter SALEMENES and ZARINA.

Sal. My sister! Courage :
Shame not our blood with trembling, but remember
From whence we sprung. The queen is present, sire.

Zar. I pray thee, brother, leave me.

Sal. Since you ask it.
[Exit SALEMENES.

Zar. Alone with him! How many a year has pass'd,
Though we are still so young, since we have met,
Which I have worn in widowhood of heart!
He loved me not: yet he seems little changed—
Changed to me only—would the change were mutual!
He speaks not—scarce regards me—not a word,
Nor look—yet he *was* soft of voice and aspect,
Indifferent, not austere. My lord!

Sar. Zarina!

Zar. No, *not* Zarina—do not say Zarina.
That tone—that word—annihilate long years,
And things which make them longer.

Sar. 'T is too late
To think of these past dreams. Let's not reproach—
That is, reproach me not for the *last* time—

Zar. And *first*. I ne'er reproach'd you.

Sar. 'T is most true;

And that reproof comes heavier on my heart
Than——But our hearts are not in our own power.

Zar. Nor hands; but I gave both.

Sar.

Your brother said

It was your will to see me ere you went
From Nineveh with——(*He hesitates*).

Zar.

Our children: it is true.

I wish'd to thank you that you have not divided
My heart from all that's left it now to love—
Those who are yours and mine, who look like you,
And look upon me as you look'd upon me
Once——but they have not changed.

Sar.

Nor ever will.

I fain would have them dutiful.

Zar.

I cherish

Those infants, not alone from the blind love
Of a fond mother, but as a fond woman.
They are now the only tie between us.

Sar.

Deem not

I have not done you justice: rather make them
Resemble your own line than their own sire.
I trust them with you—to you: fit them for
A throne, or, if that be denied——You have heard
Of this night's tumults?

Zar.

I had half forgotten,

And could have welcomed any grief save yours,
Which gave me to behold your face again.

Sar. The throne—I say it not in fear—but 'tis
In peril: they perhaps may never mount it;
But let them not for this lose sight of it.
I will dare all things to bequeath it them;
But if I fail, then they must win it back
Bravely—and, won, wear it wisely, not as I
Have wasted down my royalty.

Zar.

They ne'er

Shall know from me of aught but what may honour
Their father's memory.

Sar.

Rather let them hear

The truth from you than from a trampling world.
If they be in adversity, they'll learn
Too soon the scorn of crowds for crownless princes.
And find that all their father's sins are theirs.
My boys!—I could have borne it were I childless.

Zar. Oh ! do not say so—do not poison all
My peace left, by unwishing that thou wert
A father. If thou conquerest, they shall reign,
And honour him who saved the realm for them,
So little cared for as his own ; and if——

Sar. 'Tis lost, all earth will cry out, thank your father !
And they will swell the echo with a curse.

Zar. That they shall never do : but rather honour
The name of him, who, dying like a king,
In his last hours did more for his own memory
Than many monarchs in a length of days,
Which date the flight of time, but make no annals.

Sar. Our annals draw perchance unto their close ;
But at the least, whate'er the past, their end
Shall be like their beginning—memorable.

Zar. Yet be not rash—be careful of your life,
Live but for those who love.

Sar. And who are they ?
A slave, who loves from passion—I'll not say
Ambition—she has seen thrones shake, and loves ;
A few friends who have revell'd till we are
As one, for they are nothing if I fall ;
A brother I have injured—children whom
I have neglected, and a spouse——

Zar. Who loves.

Sar. And pardons ?

Zar. I have never thought of this,
And cannot pardon till I have condemn'd.

Sar. My wife !

Zar. Now blessings on thee for that word !
I never thought to hear it more—from thee.

Sar. Oh ! thou wilt hear it from my subjects. Yes—
These slaves whom I have nurtured, pamper'd, fed,
And swoln with peace, and gorged with plenty, till
They reign themselves—all monarchs in their mansions—
Now swarm forth in rebellion, and demand
His death, who made their lives a jubilee ;
While the few upon whom I have no claim
Are faithful ! This is true, yet monstrous.

Zar. 'Tis
Perhaps too natural ; for benefits
Turn poison in bad minds.

Sar. And good ones make
Good out of evil. Happier than the bee,
Which hives not but from wholesome flowers.

Zar. Then reap
The honey, nor inquire whence 't is derived.
Be satisfied—you are not all abandon'd.

Sar. My life insures me that. How long, bethink you,
Were not I yet a king, should I be mortal ;
That is, where mortals *are*, not where they must be ?

Zar. I know not. But yet live for my—that is,
Your children's sake !

Sar. My gentle, wrong'd Zarina !
I am the very slave of circumstance
And impulse—borne away with every breath !
Misplaced upon the throne—misplaced in life.
I know not what I could have been, but feel
I am not what I should be—let it end.
But take this with thee : if I was not form'd
To prize a love like thine, a mind like thine,
Nor dote even on thy beauty—as I've doted
On lesser charms, for no cause save that such
Devotion was a duty, and I hated
All that look'd like a chain for me or others
(This even rebellion must avouch) ; yet hear
These words, perhaps among my last—that none
E'er valued more thy virtues, though he knew not
To profit by them—as the miner lights
Upon a vein of virgin ore, discovering
That which avails him nothing : he hath found it,
But 't is not his—but some superior's, who
Placed him to dig, but not divide the wealth
Which sparkles at his feet ; nor dare he lift
Nor poise it, but must grovel on, upturning
The sullen earth.

Zar. Oh ! if thou hast at length
Discover'd that my love is worth esteem,
I ask no more—but let us hence together,
And I—let me say *we*—shall yet be happy.
Assyria is not all the earth—we'll find
A world out of our own—and be more bless'd
Than I have ever been, or thou, with all
An empire to indulge thee.

Enter SALEMENES.

Sal. I must part ye—
The moments, which must not be lost, are passing.

Zar. Inhuman brother! wilt thou thus weigh out
Instants so high and blest?

Sal. Blest!

Zar. He hath been
So gentle with me, that I cannot think
Of quitting.

Sal. So—this feminine farewell
Ends as such partings end, in *no* departure.
I thought as much, and yielded against all
My better bodings. But it must not be.

Zar. Not be?

Sal. Remain, and perish—

Zar. With my husband—

Sal. And children.

Zar. Alas!

Sal. Hear me, sister, like
My sister:—all's prepared to make your safety
Certain, and of the boys too, our last hopes;
'Tis not a single question of mere feeling,
Though that were much—but 'tis a point of state:
The rebels would do more to seize upon
The offspring of their sovereign, and so crush—

Zar. Ah! do not name it.

Sal. Well, then, mark me: when
They are safe beyond the Median's grasp, the rebels
Have miss'd their chief aim—the extinction of
The line of Nimrod. Though the present king
Fall, his sons live for victory and vengeance.

Zar. But could not I remain, alone?

Sal. What! leave
Your children, with two parents and yet orphans—
In a strange land—so young, so distant?

Zar. No—
My heart will break.

Sal. New you know all—decide.

Sar. Zarina, he hath spoken well, and we
Must yield awhile to this necessity.
Remaining here, you may lose all; departing,
You save the better part of what is left,

To both of us, and to such loyal hearts
As yet beat in these kingdoms.

Sal. The time presses.

Sar. Go, then. * If e'er we meet again, perhaps
I may be worthier of you—and, if not,
Remember that my faults, though not atoned for,
Are ended. Yet I dread thy nature will
Grieve more about the blighted name and ashes
Which once were mightiest in Assyria—than—
But I grow womanish again, and must not;
I must learn sternness now. My sins have all
Been of the softer order—*hide* thy tears—
I do not bid thee *not* to shed them—'t were
Easier to stop Euphrates at its source
Than one tear of a true and tender heart—
But let me not behold them; they unman me
Here when I had remann'd myself. My brother,
Lead her away.

Zar. Oh, God, I never shall
Behold him more!

Sal. (*striving to conduct her*). Nay, sister, I *must* be
obey'd.

Zar. I must remain—away! you shall not hold me.
What, shall he die alone?—*I* live alone?

Sal. He shall *not die alone*; but lonely you
Have lived for years.

Zar. That's false. I knew *he* lived,
And lived upon his image—let me go!

Sal. (*conducting her off the stage*). Nay, then, I must
use some fraternal force,
Which you will pardon.

Zar. Never. Help me! Oh!
Sardanapalus, wilt thou thus behold me
Torn from thee?

Sal. Nay—then all is lost again,
If that this moment is not gain'd.

Zar. My brain turns—
My eyes fail—where is he?

[*She faints.*]

Sar. (*advancing*). No—set her down;
She's dead—and you have slain her.

Sal. 'Tis the mere
Faintness of o'erwrought passion: in the air

She will recover. Pray, keep back.—[*Aside.*] I must
 Avail myself of this sole moment to
 Bear her to where her children are embark'd,
 I' the royal galley on the river. [*SÁLEMENES bears her off.*]

Sar. (*solus*). This, too—

And this too must I suffer—I, who never
 Inflicted purposely on human hearts
 A voluntary pang! But that is false—
 She loved me, and I loved her.—Fatal passion!
 Why dost thou not expire *at once* in hearts
 Which thou hast lighted up at once? Zarina!
 I must pay dearly for the desolation
 Now brought upon thee. Had I never loved
 But thee, I should have been an unopposed
 Monarch of honouring nations. To what gulfs
 A single deviation from the track
 Of human duties leads even those who claim
 The homage of mankind as their born due,
 And find it, till they forfeit it themselves!

Enter MYRRHA.

Sar. You here! Who call'd you?

Myr. No one—but I heard
 Far off a voice of wail and lamentation,
 And thought——

Sar. It forms no portion of your duties
 To enter here till sought for.

Myr. Though I might,
 Perhaps, recall some softer words of yours
 (Although they *too were chiding*), which reprov'd
 Because I ever dreaded to intrude;
 Resisting my own wish and your injunction
 To heed no time nor presence, but approach you
 Uncall'd for:—I retire.

Sar. Yet stay—being 'here.
 I pray you pardon me: events have sour'd me
 Till I wax peevish—heed it not: I shall
 Soon be myself again.

Myr. I wait with patience,
 What I shall see with pleasure.

Sar. Scarce a moment
 Before your entrance in this hall, Zarina,
 Queen of Assyria, departed hence.

Myr. Ah !

Sar. Wherefore do you start ?

Myr. Did I do so ?

Sar. 'T was well you enter'd by another portal,
Else you had met. That pang at least is spared her !

Myr. I know to feel for her.

Sar. That is too much,

And beyond nature—'t is nor mutual

Nor possible. You cannot pity her,

Nor she aught but——

Myr. Despise the favourite slave ?
Not more than I have ever scorn'd myself.

Sar. Scorn'd ! what, to be the envy of your sex,
And lord it o'er the heart of the world's lord ?

Myr. Were you the lord of twice ten thousand worlds—
As you are like to lose the one you sway'd—

I did abase myself as much in being

Your paramour, as though you were a peasant—

Nay, more, if that the peasant were a Greek.

Sar. You talk it well——

Myr. And truly.

Sar. In the hour

Of man's adversity all things grow daring

Against the falling ; but as I am not

Quite fall'n, nor now disposed to bear reproaches,

Perhaps because I merit them too often,

Let us then part while peace is still between us.

Myr. Part !

Sar. Have not all past human beings parted,
And must not all the present one day part ?

Myr. Why ?

Sar. For your safety, which I will have look'd to,
With a strong escort to your native land ;
And such gifts, as, if you had not been all
A queen, shall make your dowry worth a kingdom.

Myr. I pray you talk not thus.

Sar. The queen is gone :
You need not shame to follow. I would fall
Alone—I seek no partners but in pleasure.

Myr. And I no pleasure but in parting not.
You shall not force me from you.

Sar. Think well of it——

It soon may be too late.

Myr. So let it be ;
For then you cannot separate me from you.

Sar. And will not ; but I thought you wish'd it.

Myr.

II

Sar. You spoke of your abasement.

Myr.

And I feel it

Deeply—more deeply than all things but love.

Sar. Then fly from it.

Myr.

'T will not recall the past—

'T will not restore my honour, nor my heart.

No—here I stand or fall. If that you conquer,

I live to joy in your great triumph : should

Your lot be different, I'll not weep, but share it.

You did not doubt me a few hours ago.

Sar. Your courage never—nor your love till now ;

And none could make me doubt it save yourself.

Those words——

Myr.

Were words. I pray you, let the proofs

Be in the past acts you were pleased to praise

This very night, and in my further bearing,

Beside, wherever you are borne by fate.

Sar. I am content : and, trusting in my cause,

Think we may yet be victors and return

To peace—the only victory I covet.

To me war is no glory—conquest no

Renown. To be forced thus to uphold my right

Sits heavier on my heart than all the wrongs

These men would bow me down with. Never, never

Can I forget this night, even should I live

To add to it the memory of others.

I thought to have made mine inoffensive rule

An era of sweet peace 'midst bloody annals,

A green spot amidst desert centuries,

On which the future would turn back and smile,

And cultivate, or sigh when it could not

Recall Sardanapalus' golden reign.

I thought to have made my realm a paradise,

And every moon an epoch of new pleasures.

I took the rabble's shouts for love—the breath

Of friends for truth—the lips of woman for

My only guerdon—so they are, my Myrrha :

[*He kisses her.*]

Kiss me. Now let them take my realm and life !

They shall have both, but never thee !

Myr.

No, never !

Man may despoil his brother man of all

That's great or glittering—kingdoms fall, hosts yield,

Friends fail, slaves fly, and all betray—and, more

Than all, the most indebted—but a heart

That loves without self-love ! 'T is here—now prove it.

Enter SALEMENES.

Sal. I sought you—How ! *she* here again ?

Sar.

Return not

Now to reproof : methinks your aspect speaks

Of higher matter than a woman's presence.

Sal. The only woman whom it much imports me

At such a moment now is safe in absence—

The queen's embark'd.

Sar.

And well ? say that much.

Sal.

Yes.

Her transient weakness has pass'd o'er ; at least,

It settled into tearless silence ; her

Pale face and glittering eye, after a glance

Upon her sleeping children, were still fix'd

Upon the palace towers as the swift galley

Stole down the hurrying stream beneath the starlight ;

But she said nothing.

Sar.

Would I felt no more

Than she has said !

Sal.

'T is now too late to feel.

Your feelings cannot cancel a sole pang :

To change them, my advices bring sure tidings

That the rebellious Medes and Chaldees, marshall'd

By their two leaders, are already up

In arms again ; and, sennying their ranks,

Prepare to attack : they have apparently

Been join'd by other satraps.

Sar.

What ! more rebels ?

Let us be first, then.

Sal.

That were hardly prudent

Now, though it was our first intention. If

By noon to-morrow we are join'd by those

I've sent for by sure messengers, we shall be

In strength enough to venture an attack,

Ay, and pursuit too ; but, till then, my voice
Is to await the onset.

Sar. I detest

That waiting ; though it seems so safe to fight
Behind high walls, and hurl down foes into
Deep fosses, or behold them sprawl on spikes
Strew'd to receive them, still I like it not—
My soul seems lukewarm ; but when I set on them,
Though they were piled on mountains, I would have
A pluck at them, or perish in hot blood !—
Let me then charge.

Sal. You talk like a young soldier.

Sar. I am no soldier, but a man : speak not
Of soldiership, I loathe the word, and those
Who pride themselves upon it ; but direct me
Where I may pour upon them.

Sal. You must spare
To expose your life too hastily : 't is not
Like mine or any other subject's breath ;
The whole war turns upon it—with it ; this
Alone creates it, kindles, and may quench it—
Prolong it—end it.

Sar. Then let us end both !
'T were better thus, perhaps, than prolong either ;
I'm sick of one, perchance of both.

[*A trumpet sounds without.*

Sal.

Hark !

Sar.

Let us

Reply, not listen.

Sal.

And your wound !

Sar.

'T is bound—

'T is heal'd—I had forgotten it. Away !
A leech's lancet would have scratch'd me deeper ;
The slave that gave it might be well ashamed
To have struck so weakly.

Sal. Now, may none this hour
Strike with a better aim !

Sar.

Ay, if we conquer ;

But if not, they will only leave to me
A task they might have spared their king. Upon them !

[*Trumpet sounds again.*

Sal. I am with you.

Sar. Ho, my arms ! again, my arms ! [*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*The same Hall in the Palace.*

MYRRHA and BALEA.

Myr. (at a window). The day at last has broken. What a night

Hath usher'd it ! how beautiful in heaven !
Though varied with a transitory storm,
More beautiful in that variety !
How hideous upon earth ! where peace and hope,
And love and revel, in an hour were trampled
By human passions to a human chaos,
Not yet resolved to separate elements—
"Tis warring still ! And can the sun so rise,
So bright, so rolling back the clouds into
Vapours more lovely than the unclouded sky,
With golden pinnacles, and snowy mountains,
And billows purpler than the ocean's, making
In heaven a glorious mockery of the earth,
So like we almost deem it permanent ;
So fleeting, we can scarcely call it aught
Beyond a vision, 't is so transiently
Scatter'd along the eternal vault : and yet
It dwells upon the soul, and soothes the soul,
And blends itself into the soul, until
Sunrise and sunset form the haunted epoch
Of sorrow and of love ; which they who mark not,
Know not the realms where those twin genii
(Who chasten and who purify our hearts,
So that we would not change their sweet rebukes,
For all the boisterous joys that ever shook
The air with clamour) build the palaces
Where their fond votaries repose and breathe
Briefly ;—but in that brief cool calm inhale
Enough of heaven to enable them to bear
The rest of common, heavy human hours,
And dream them through in placid sufferance,
Though seemingly employ'd like all the rest
Of toiling breathers in allotted tasks
Of pain or pleasure, *two* names for *one* feeling,

Which our internal, restless agony
Would vary in the sound, although the sense
Escapes our highest efforts to be happy.

Bal. You muse right calmly : and can you so watch
The sunrise which may be our last ?

Myr. It is
Therefore that I so watch it, and reproach
Those eyes, which never may behold it more,
For having look'd upon it oft, too oft,
Without the reverence and the rapture due
To that which keeps all earth from being as fragile
As I am in this form. Come, look upon it,
The Chaldee's god, which when I gaze upon
I grow almost a convert to your Baal.

Bal. As now he reigns in heaven, so once on earth
He sway'd.

Myr. He sways it now far more, then ; never
Had earthly monarch half the power and glory
Which centres in a single ray of his.

Bal. Surely he is a god !

Myr. So we Greeks deem too ;
And yet I sometimes think that gorgeous orb
Must rather be the abode of gods than one
Of the immortal sovereigns. Now he breaks
Through all the clouds, and fills my eyes with light
That shuts the world out. I can look no more.

Bal. Hark ! heard you not a sound ?

Myr. No, 't was mere fancy ;
They battle it beyond the wall, and not
As in late midnight conflict in the very
Chambers : the palace has become a fortress
Since that insidious hour ; and here, within
The very centre, girded by vast courts
And regal halls of pyramid proportions,
Which must be carried one by one before
They penetrate to where they then arrived,
We are as much shut in even from the sound
Of peril as from glory.

Bal. But they reach'd
Thus far before.

Myr. Yes, by surprise, and were
Beat back by valour : now at once we have
Courage and vigilance to guard us.

Bal.

May they

Prosper !

Myr. That is the prayer of many, and
The dread of more : it is an anxious hour ;
I strive to keep it from my thoughts. Alas !
How vainly !

Bal. It is said the king's demeanour
In the late action scarcely more appall'd
The rebels than astonish'd his true subjects.

Myr. 'T is easy to astonish or appal
The vulgar mass which moulds a horde of slaves ;
But he did bravely.

Bal. Slew he not Beleses?
I heard the soldiers say he struck him down.

Myr. The wretch was overthrown, but rescued to
Triumph, perhaps, o'er one who vanquish'd him
In fight, as he had spared him in his peril ;
And by that heedless pity risk'd a crown.

Bal.

Hark !

Myr. You are right; some steps approach, bnt slowly.

Enter Soldiers, bearing in SALEMNES wounded, with a broken javelin in his side: they seat him upon one of the couches which furnish the Apartment.

Myr. Oh, Jove!

Bal.

Then all is over.

Sol.

That is false.

Hew down the slave who says so, if a soldier.

Myr. Spare him—he's none, but a mere court butterfly,
That flutters in the pageant of a monarch.

Sal. Let him live on, then.

Mr.

So wilt thou, I trust.

Sal. I fain would live this hour out, and the event,
But doubt it. Wherefore did ye bear me here?

Sol. By the king's order. When the javelin struck
you.

You fell and fainted: 't was his strict command
To bear you to this hall. •

Sal.

'T was not ill done:

For seeming slain in that cold dizzy trance,
The sight might shake our soldiers— but—'t is vain,
I feel it ebbing !

Myr. Let me see the wound ;
I am not quite skillless : in my native land
'T is part of our instruction. War being constant,
We're nerved to look on such things.

Sal. Best extract
The javelin.

Myr. Hold ! no, no, it cannot be.

Sal. I'm sped, then !

Myr. With the blood that fast must follow
The extracted weapon, I do fear thy life.

Sal. And I *not* death. Where was the king when you
Convey'd me from the spot where I was stricken ?

Sal. Upon the same ground, and encouraging
With voice and gesture the dispirited troops
Who had seen you fall, and falter'd back.

Sal. Whom heard ye
Named next to the command ?

Sol. I did not hear.

Sal. Fly then, and tell him, 't was my last request
That Zames take my post until the junction,
So hoped for, yet delay'd, of Ofratanes,
Satrap of Susa. Leave me here : our troops
Are not so numerous as to spare your absence.

Sol. But, prince——

Sal. Hence, I say ! Here's a courtier and
A woman, the best chamber company.
As you would not permit me to expire
Upon the field, I'll have no idle soldiers
About my sick couch. Hence ! and do my bidding !
[*Exeunt the Soldiers.*]

Myr. Gallant and glorious spirit ! must the earth
So soon resign thee ?

Sal. Gentle Myrrha, 't is
The end I would have chosen, had I saved
The monarch or the monarchy by this ;
As 't is, I have not outlived them.

Myr. You wax paler.

Sal. Your hand ; this broken weapon but prolongs
My pangs, without sustaining life enough
To make me useful : I would draw it forth
And my life with it, could I but hear how
The fight goes.

Enter SARDANAPALUS and Soldiers.

Sar. My best brother!

Sal. And the battle

Is lost?

Sar. (*despondingly*). You see me here.

Sal. I'd rather see you *thus*!

[*He draws out the weapon from the wound, and dies.*]

Sar. And thus I will be seen; unless the succour,
The last frail reed of our beleaguer'd hopes,
Arrive with Ofratanes.

Myr. Did you not
Receive a token from your dying brother,
Appointing Zames chief?

Sar. I did.

Myr. Where's Zames?

Sar. Dead.

Myr. And Altada?

Sar. Dying.

Myr. Pania? Sfero?

Sar. Pania yet lives; but Sfero's fled or captive.
I am alone.

Myr. And is all lost?

Sar. Our walls,
Though thinly mann'd, may still hold out against
Their present force, or aught save treachery:
But 't' the field——

Myr. I thought 'twas the intent
Of Salemenes not to risk a sally
Till ye were strengthen'd by the expected succours.

Sar. I overruled him.

Myr. Well, the fault's a brave one.

Sar. But fatal. Oh, my brother! I would give
These realms, of which thou wert the ornament,
The sword and shield, the sole-redeeming honour,
To call back—— But I will not weep for thee;
Thou shalt be mourn'd for as thou wouldst be mourn'd.
It grieves me most that thou couldst quit this life
Believing that I could survive what thou
Hast died for—our long royalty of race.
If I redeem it, I will give thee blood
Of thousands, tears of millions, for atonement
(The tears of all the good are thine already).

If not, we meet again soon,—if the spirit
 Within us lives beyond ;—thou readest mine,
 And dost me justice now. Let me once clasp
 That yet warm hand, and fold that throbless heart
[Embraces the body.]

To this which beats so bitterly. Now, bear
 The body hence.

Soldier. Where?

Sar. To my proper chamber,
 Place it beneath my canopy, as though
 The king lay there : when this is done, we will
 Speak further of the rites due to such ashes.

[Exeunt Soldiers with the body of SALEMENES.]

Enter PANIA.

Sar. Well, Pania! have you placed the guards, and
 issued
 The orders fix'd on?

Pan. Sire, I have obey'd.

Sar. And do the soldiers keep their hearts up?

Pan. Sire?

Sar. I'm answer'd! When a king asks twice, an I has
 A question as an answer to *his* question,
 It is a portent. What! they are dishearten'd?

Pan. The death of Salemenes, and the shouts
 Of the exulting rebels on his fall,
 Have made them——

Sar. *Rage*—not droop—it should have been.
 We'll find the means to rouse them.

Pan. Such a loss
 Might sadden even a victory.

Sar. Alas!
 Who can so feel it as I feel? but yet,
 Though coop'd within these walls, they're strong, and we
 Have those without will break their way through hosts,
 To make their sovereign's dwelling what it was—
 A palace; not a prison, nor a fortress.

Enter an Officer, hastily.

Sar. Thy face seems ominous. Speak!

Off.

I dare not.

Sar.

Dare not?

While millions dare revolt with sword in hand!

That's strange. I pray thee break that loyal silence
Which loathes to shock its sovereign; we can hear
Worse than thou hast to tell.

Pan. Proceed, thou hearest.

Offi. The wall which skirted near the river's brink
Is thrown down by the sudden inundation
Of the Euphrates, which now rolling, swoln
From the enormous mountains where it rises,
By the late rains of that tempestuous region,
Overflows its banks, and hath destroy'd the bulwark.

Pan. That's a black augury! it has been said
For ages, "That the city ne'er should yield
To man, until the river grew its foe."

Sar. I can forgive the omen, not the ravage.
How much is swept down of the wall?

Offi. About
Some twenty stadia.

Sar. And all this is left
Pervious to the assailants?

Offi. For the present
The river's fury must impede the assault;
But when he shrinks into his wonted channel,
And may be cross'd by the accustom'd barks,
The palace is their own.

Sar. That shall be never.
Though men, and gods, and elements, and omens,
Have risen up 'gainst one who ne'er provoked them,
My fathers' house shall never be a cave
For wolves to horde and howl in.

Pan. With your sanction,
I will proceed to the spot, and take such measures
For the assurance of the vacant space
As time and means permit.

Sar. About it straight,
And bring me back, as speedily as full
And fair investigation may permit,
Report of the true state of this irruption
Of waters. [*Exeunt PANIA and the Officer.*]

Myr. Thus the very waves rise up
Against you.

Sar. They are not my subjects, girl,
And may be pardon'd, since they can't be punish'd.

Myr. I joy to see this portent shakes you not.

Sar. I am past the fear of portents : they can tell me
Nothing I have not told myself since midnight :
Despair anticipates such things.

Myr. Despair !

Sar. No ; not despair precisely. When we know
All that can come, and how to meet it, our
Resolves, if firm, may merit a more noble
Word than this is to give it utterance.
But what are words to us ? we have well nigh done
With them and all things.

Myr. Save *one deed*—the last
And greatest to all mortals ; crowning act
Of all that was, or is, or is to be—
The only thing common to all mankind,
So different in their births, tongues, sexes, natures,
Hues, features, climes, times, feelings, intellects,
Without one point of union save in this,
To which we tend, for which we're born, and thread
The labyrinth of mystery, call'd life.

Sar. Our clew being well nigh wound out, let's be
cheerful.
They who have nothing more to fear may well
Indulge a smile at that which once appall'd ;
As children at discover'd bugbears.

Re-enter PANIA.

Pan. 'Tis
As was reported : I have order'd there
A double guard, withdrawing from the wall
Where it was strongest the required addition
To watch the breach occasion'd by the waters.

Sar. You have done your duty faithfully, and as
My worthy Pania ! further ties between us
Draw near a close—I pray you take this key :

[Gives a key.]

It opens to a secret chamber, placed
Behind the couch in my own chamber. (Now
Press'd by a nobler weight than e'er it bore --
Though a long line of sovereigns have lain down
Along its golden frame—as bearing for
A time what late was Salemenes.) Search
The secret covert to which this will lead you ;
'Tis full of treasure ; take it for yourself

And your companions : there's enough to load ye,
Though ye be many. Let the slaves be freed, too ;
And all the inmates of the palace, of
Whatever sex, now quit it in an hour.
Thence launch the regal barks, once form'd for pleasure,
And now to serve for safety, and embark.
The river's broad and swoln, and uncommanded
(More potent than a king) by these besiegers.
Fly! and be happy!

Pan. Under your protection!
So you accompany your faithful guard.

Sar. No, Pania! that must not be! get thee hence,
And leave me to my fate.

Pan. 'T is the first time
I ever disobey'd : but now——

Sar. So all men
Dare beard me now, and Insolence within
Apes Treason from without. Question no further ;
'T is my command, my last command. Wilt *thou*
Oppose it? *thou*!

Pan. But yet—not yet.

Sar. Well, then,
Swear that you will obey when I shall give
The signal.

Pan. With a heavy but true heart,
I promise.

Sar. 'T is enough. Now order here
Faggots, pine-nuts, and wither'd leaves, and such
Things as catch fire and blaze with one sole spark ;
Bring cedar, too, and precious drugs, and spices,
And mighty planks, to nourish a tall pile ;
Bring frankincense and myrrh, too, for it is
For a great sacrifice I build the pyre!
And heap them round yon throne.

Pan. My lord!

Sar. I have said it,
And you have sworn.

Pan. And could keep my faith
Without a vow. [Exit PANIA.

Myr. What mean you?

Sar. You shall know
Anon—what the whole earth shall ne'er forget.

PANIA, *returning with a Herald.*

Pan. My king, in going forth upon my duty,
This herald has been brought before me, craving
An audience.

Sar. Let him speak.

Her. The King Arbaces——

Sar. What, crown'd already?—But, proceed.

Her. Beleses,

The anointed high-priest——

Sar. Of what god or demon?

With new kings rise new altars. But, proceed;
You are sent to prate your masters' will, and not
Reply to mine.

Her. And Satrap Ofratanes——

Sar. Why *he* is *ours*.

Her. (*showing a ring*). Be sure that he is now
In the camp of the conquerors; behold
His signet ring.

Sar. 'T is his. A worthy triad!
Poor Salemenes! thou hast died in time
To see one treachery the less: this man
Was thy true friend and my most trusted subject.
Proceed.

Her. They offer thee thy life, and freedom
Of choice to single out a residence
In any of the further provinces,
Guarded and watch'd, but not confined in person,
Where thou shalt pass thy days in peace; but on
Condition that the three young princes are
Given up as hostages.

Sar. (*ironically*). The generous victors!

Her. I wait the answer.

Sar. Answer, slave! How long
Have slaves decided on the doom of kings?

Her. Since they were free.

Sar. Mouthpiece of mutiny!
Thou at the least shalt learn the penalty
Of treason, though its proxy only. Pania!
Let his head be thrown from our walls within
The rebels' lines, his carcass down the river.
Away with him!

[PANIA and the guards seizing him.]

Pan. I never yet obey'd
Your orders with more pleasure than the present.
Hence with him, soldiers! do not soil this hall
Of royalty with treasonable gore;
Put him to rest without.

Her. A single word:
My office, king, is sacred.

Sar. And what's *mine*?
That thou shouldst come and dare to ask of me
To lay it down?

Her. I but obey'd my orders,
At the same peril if refused, as now
Incurr'd by my obedience.

Sar. So there are
New monarchs of an hour's growth as despotic
As sovereigns swathed in purple, and enthroned
From birth to manhood!

Her. My life waits your breath.
Yours (I speak humbly)—but it may be—yours
May also be in danger scarce less imminent:
Would it then suit the last hours of a line
Such as is that of Nimrod, to destroy
A peaceful herald, unarm'd, in his office;
And violate not only all that man
Holds sacred between man and man—but that
More holy tie which links us with the gods?

Sar. He's right.—Let him go free.—My life's last act
Shall not be one of wrath. Here, fellow, take

[*Gives him a golden cup from a table near.*
This golden goblet, let it hold your wine,
And think of *me*; or melt it into ingots,
And think of nothing but their weight and value.

Her. I thank you doubly for my life, and this
Most gorgeous gift, which renders it more precious.
But must I bear no answer?

Sar. Yes,—I ask
An hour's truce to consider.

Her. But an hour's?

Sar. An hour's: if at the expiration of
That time your masters hear no further from me,
They are to deem that I reject their terms,
And act befittingly.

Her. I shall not fail

To be a faithful legate of your pleasure.

Sar. And hark ! a word more.

Her. I shall not forget it.

Whate'er it be.

Sar. Commend me to Beleses ;
And tell him, ere a year expire, I summon
Him hence to meet me.

Her. Where ?

Sar. At Babylon.

At least from thence he will depart to meet me.

Her. I shall obey you to the letter. [*Exit Herald.*]

Sar. Pania !—

Now, my good Pania !—quick—with what I order'd.

Pan. My lord,—the soldiers are already charged.
And see ! they enter.

[*Soldiers enter, and form a Pile about the Throne, &c.*]

Sar. Higher, my good soldiers,
And thicker yet : and see that the foundation
Be such as will not speedily exhaust
Its own too subtle flame ; nor yet be quench'd
With aught officious aid would bring to quell it.
Let the throne form the *core* of it ; I would not
Leave that, save fraught with fire unquenchable,
To the new comers. Frame the whole as if
'T were to enkindle the strong tower of our
Inveterate enemies. Now it bears an aspect !
How say you, Pania, will this pile suffice
For a king's obsequies ?

Pan. Ay, for a kingdom's.

I understand you, now.

Sar. And blame me ?

Pan. No—

Let me but fire the pile, and share it with you.

Myr. That duty's mine.

Pan. A woman's !

Myr. 'T is the soldier's

Part to die *for* his sovereign, and why not

The woman's with her lover ?

Pan. 'T is most strange !

Myr. But not so rare, my Pania, as thou think'st it.
In the mean time, live thou.—Farewell ! the pile
Is ready.

Pan. I should shame to leave my sovereign

With but a single female to partake
His death.

Sar. Too many far have heralded
Me to the dust already. Get thee hence :
Enrich thee.

Pan. And live wretched !

Sar. Think upon
Thy vow :—'t is sacred and irrevocable.

Pan. Since it is so, farewell.

Sar. Search well my chamber,
Feel no remorse at bearing off the gold ;
Remember, what you leave you leave the slaves
Who slew me : and when you have borne away
All safe off to your boats, blow one long blast
Upon the trumpet as you quit the palace.
The river's brink is too remote, its stream
Too loud at present to permit the echo
To reach distinctly from its banks. Then fly,—
And as you sail, turn back ; but still keep on
Your way along the Euphrates : if you reach
The land of Paphlagonia, where the queen
Is safe with my three sons in Cotta's court,
Say, what you *saw* at parting, and request
That she remember what I *said* at one
Parting more mournful still.

Pan. That royal hand !
Let me then once more press it to my lips ;
And these poor soldiers who throng round you, and
Would fain die with you !

[*The Soldiers and PANIA throng round him, kissing his
hand and the hem of his robe.*]

Sar. My best ! my last friends !
Let's not urman each other : part at once :
All farewells should be sudden, when for ever,
Else they make an eternity of moments,
And clog the last sad sands of life with tears.
Hence, and be happy : trust me, I am not
Now to be pitied ; or far *more* for what
Is past than present ; for the future, 't is
In the hand of the deities, if such
There be : I shall know soon. Farewell—Farewell.

[*Exeunt PANIA and Soldiers.*]

Myr. These men were honest : it is comfort still
That our last looks should be on loving faces.

Sar. And *lovely* ones, my beautiful ! but hear me !
If at this moment—for we now are on
The brink—thou feel'st an inward shrinking from
This leap through flame into the future, say it :
I shall not love thee less ; nay, perhaps more,
For yielding to thy nature ; and there 's time
Yet for thee to escape hence.

Myr. Shall I light
One of the torches which lie heap'd beneath
The ever-burning lamp that burns without,
Before Baal's shrine, in the adjoining hall ?

Sar. Do so. Is that thy answer ?

Myr. Thou shalt see.

[*Exit MYRRHA.*]

Sar. (solus). She's firm. My fathers ! whom I will rejoin,
It may be, purified by death from some
Of the gross stains of too material being,
I would not leave your ancient first abode
To the defilement of usurping bondmen ;
If I have not kept your inheritance
As ye bequeath'd it, this bright part of it,
Your treasure, your abode, your sacred relics
Of arms and records, monuments, and spoils,
In which *they* would have revell'd, I bear with me
To you in that absorbing element,
Which most personifies the soul as leaving
The least of matter un-oursued before
Its fiery workings :—and the light of this
Most royal of funereal pyres shall be
Not a mere pillar form'd of cloud and flame,
A beacon in the horizon for a day,
And then a mount of ashes, but a light
To less-on ages, rebel nations, and
Voluptuous princes. Time shall quench full many
A people's records, and a hero's acts ;
Sweep empire after empire, like this first
Of empires, into nothing } but even then
Shall spare this deed of mine, and hold it up
A problem few dare imitate, and none
Despise—but, it may be, avoid the life
Which led to such a consummation.

MYRRHA *returns with a lighted Torch in one Hand, and a Cup in the other.*

Myr. Lo !
I've lit the lamp which lights us to the stars.
Sar. And the cup ?
Myr. 'Tis my country's custom to
Make a libation to the gods.

Sar. And mine
To make libations amongst men. I've not
Forgot the custom ; and although alone,
Will drain one draught in memory of many
A joyous banquet past.

[SARDANAPALUS *takes the cup, and after drinking and tinkling the reversed cup, as a deep gull, exclaims—*

And this libation
Is for the excellent Beleses.

Myr. Why
Dwells thy mind rather upon that man's name
Than on his mate's in villainy ?

Sar. The one
Is a mere soldier, a mere tool, a kind
Of human sword in a friend's hand ; the other
Is master-mover of his warlike puppet ;
But I dismiss them from my mind.—Yet pause,
My Myrrha ! dost thou truly follow me,
Freely and fearlessly ?

Myr. And dost thou think
A Greek girl dare not do for love, that which
An Indian widow braves for custom ?

Sar. Then
We but await the signal.

Myr. It is long
In sounding.

Sar. Now, farewell ; one last embrace.

Myr. Embrace, but *not* the last ; there is one more.

Sar. True, the conningling fire will mix our ashes.

Myr. And pure as is my love to thee, shall they,
Purged from the dross of earth, and earthly passion,
Mix pale with thine. A single thought yet irks me.

Sar. Say it.

Myr. It is that no kind hand will gather
The dust of both into one urn.

Sar. The better;
 Rather let them be borne abroad upon
 The winds of heaven, and scatter'd into air,
 Than be polluted more by human hands
 Of slaves and traitors. In this blazing palace,
 And its enormous walls of reeking ruin,
 We leave a nobler monument than Egypt
 Hath piled in her brick mountains, o'er dead kings,
 Or *kine*, for none know whether those proud piles
 Be for their monarch or their ox-god Apis:
 So much for monuments that have forgotten
 Their very record!

Myr. Then farewell, thou earth!
 And loveliest spot of earth! farewell, Ionia!
 Be thou still free and beautiful, and far
 Aloof from desolation! My last prayer
 Was for thee, my last thoughts, save one, were of thee!

Sar. And that?

Myr. Is yours.

[*The trumpet of PANIA sounds without.*

Sar.

Hark!

Myr.

Now!

Sar.

Adieu, Assyria?

I loved thee well, my own, my fathers' land,
 And better as my country than my kingdom.
 I sated thee with peace and joys; and this
 Is my reward! and now I owe thee nothing,
 Not even a grave. [*He mounts the pile.*

Now, Myrrha!

Myr.

Art thou ready?

Sar. As the torch in thy grasp. [*MYRRHA fires the pile.*

Myr.

'Tis fired! I come.

[*As MYRRHA springs forward to throw herself into
 the flames, the Curtain falls.*

THE TWO FOSCARI.

AN HISTORICAL TRAGEDY.

"The father softens, but the governor's resolved."—CRITIC.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.	Other Senators, The Council of Ten, Guards, Attendants, &c. &c.
FRANCIS FOSCARI, <i>Doge of Venice.</i>	
JACOPO FOSCARI, <i>Son of the Doge.</i>	WOMAN.
JAMES LOREDANO, <i>a Patrician.</i>	MARINA, <i>Wife of young FOSCARI.</i>
MARCO MEMMO, <i>a Chief of the Forty.</i>	
BARBARIGO, <i>a Senator.</i>	SCENE.—The Ducal Palace, Venice.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Hall in the Ducal Palace.**Enter LOREDANO and BARBARIGO, meeting.**Lor.* WHERE is the prisoner?*Bar.* Reposing from
The Question.*Lor.* The hour's past—fix'd yesterday
For the resumption of his trial.—Let us
Rejoin our colleagues in the council, and
Urge his Recall.*Bar.* Nay, let him profit by
A few brief minutes for his tortured limbs;
He was o'erwrought by the Question yesterday,
And may die under it if now repeated.*Lor.* Well?*Bar.* I yield not to you in love of justice,
Or hate of the ambitious Foscari,
Father and son, and all their noxious race;

But the poor wretch has suffer'd beyond nature's
Most stoical endurance.

Lor. Without owning
His crime?

Bar. Perhaps without committing any.
But he avow'd the letter to the Duke
Of Milan, and his sufferings half atone for
Such weakness.

Lor. We shall see.

Bar. You, Loredano
Pursue hereditary hate too far.

Lor. How far?

Bar. To extermination.

Lor. When they are
Extinct, you may say this.—Let's in to council.

Bar. Yet pause—the number of our colleagues is not
Complete yet; two are wanting ere we can
Proceed.

Lor. And the chief judge, the Doge?

Bar. No—he,
With more than Roman fortitude, is ever
First at the board in this unhappy process
Against his last and only son.

Lor. True—true—
His last.

Bar. Will nothing move you?

Lor. Feels he, think you?

Bar. He shows it not.

Lor. I have mark'd *that*—the wretch!

Bar. But yesterday, I hear, on his return
To the ducal chambers, as he pass'd the threshold
The old man fainted.

Lor. It begins to work, then.

Bar. The work is half your own.

Lor. And should be *all* mine—
My father and my uncle are no more.

Bar. I have read their epitaph, which says they died
By poison.

Lor. When the Doge declared that he
Should never deem himself a sovereign till
The death of Peter Loredano, both
The brothers sicken'd shortly:—he *is* sovereign.

Bar. A wretched one.

Lor. What should they be who make Orphans?

Bar. But *did* the Doge make you so?

Lor. Yes.

Bar. What solid proofs?

Lor. When princes set themselves To work in secret, proofs and process are Alike made difficult; but I have such Of the first, as shall make the second needless.

Bar. But you will move by law?

Lor. By all the laws Which he would leave us.

Bar. They are such in this Our state as render retribution easier Than 'mongst remoter nations. Is it true That you have written in your books of commerce (The wealthy practice of our highest nobles), "Doge Foscari, my debtor for the deaths Of Marco and Pietro Loredano, My sire and uncle?"

Lor. It is written thus.

Bar. And will you leave it uneras'd?

Lor. Till balanced.

Bar. And how?

[*Two Senators pass over the stage, as in their way to "the Hall of the Council of Ten."*]

Lor. You see the number is complete. Follow me.

[*Exit LOREDANO.*]

Bar. (*solus*). Follow *thee*! I have follow'd long Thy path of desolation, as the wave Sweeps after that before it, alike whelming The wreck that creaks to the wild winds, and wretch Who shrieks within its riven ribs, as gush The waters through them; but this son and sire Might move the elements to pause, and yet Must I on hardily like them—Oh! would I could as blindly and remorselessly!—Lo, where he comes!—Be still, my heart! they are Thy foes, must be thy victims: wilt thou beat For those who almost broke thee?

Enter Guards, with young FOSCARI as prisoner, &c.

Guard. Let him rest.
Signor, take time.

Jac. Fos. I thank thee, friend, I'm feeble ;
But thou may'st stand reproved.

Guard. I'll stand the hazard.

Jac. Fos. That's kind ;—I meet some pity, but no mercy ;
This is the first.

Guard. And might be the last, did they
Who rule behold us.

Bar. (*advancing to the Guard*). There is one who does ;
Yet fear not ; I will neither be thy judge
Nor thy accuser ; though the hour is past,
Wait their last summons—I am of "the Ten,"
And waiting for that summons, sanction you
Even by my presence : when the last call sounds,
We'll in together.—Look well to the prisoner !

Jac. Fos. What voice is that ?—'Tis Barbarigo's ! Ah !
Our house's foe, and one of my few judges.

Bar. To balance such a toe, if such there be,
Thy father sits amongst thy judges.

Jac. Fos. True,
He judges.

Bar. Then deem not the laws too harsh
Which yield so much indulgence to a sire,
As to allow his voice in such high matter
As the state's safety——

Jac. Fos. And his son's. I'm faint ;
Let me approach, I pray you, for a breath
Of air, yon window which o'erlooks the waters.

Enter an Officer, who whispers BARBARIGO.

Bar. (*to the Guard*). Let him approach. I must not
speak with him
Further than thus : I have transgress'd my duty
In this brief parley, and must now redeem it
Within the Council Chamber. [*Exit BARBARIGO.*

[*Guard conducting JACOPO FOSCARI to the window.*

Guard. There, sir, 't is
Open.—How feel you ?

Jac. Fos. Like a boy—Oh Venice !

Guard. And your limbs !

Jac. Fos. Limbs ! how often have they borne me
Bounding o'er yon blue tide, as I have skimm'd
The gondola along in childish race,
And, masqued as a young gondolier, amidst

My gay competitors, noble as I,
 Raced for our pleasure, in the pride of strength;
 While the fair populace of crowding beauties,
 Plebeian as patrician, cheer'd us on
 With dazzling smiles, and wishes audible,
 And waving kerchiefs, and applauding hands,
 Even to the goal!—How many a time have I
 Cloven with arm still lustier, breast more daring,
 The wave all round me; with a swimmer's stroke
 Flinging the billows back from my drench'd hair
 And laughing from my lip the audacious brine,
 Which kiss'd it like a wine-cup, rising o'er
 The waves as they arose, and proud as still
 The loftier they uplifted me; and oft,
 In wantonness of spirit, plunging down
 Into their green and glassy gulfs, and making
 My way to shells and seaweed, all unseen
 By those above, till they wax'd fearful: then
 Returning with my grasp full of such tokens
 As show'd that I had search'd the deep: exulting,
 With a far-dashing stroke, and drawing deep
 The long-suspended breath, again I spurn'd
 The foam which broke around me, and pursued
 My track like a sea-bird.—I was a boy then.

Guard. Be a man now: there never was more need
 Of manhood's strength.

Jac. Fos. (looking from the lattice). My beautiful, my own,
 My only Venice—*this is breath!* Thy breeze,
 Thine Adrian sea-breeze, how it fans my face!
 Thy very winds feel native to my veins,
 And cool them into calmness! How unlike
 The hot gales of the horrid Cyclades,
 Which howled about my Candote dungeon, and
 Made my heart sick!

Guard. I see the colour comes
 Back to your cheek: Heaven send you strength to bear
 What more may be imposed!—I dread to think on't.

Jac. Fos. They will not banish me again?—No—no,
 Let them wring on; I am strong yet.

Guard. Confess,
 And the rack will be spared you.

Jac. Fos. I confess'd
 Once—twice before: both times they exiled me.

Guard. And the third time will slay you.

Jac. Fos. Let them do so,

So I be buried in my birth-place: better
Be ashes here than aught that lives elsewhere.

Guard. And can you so much love the soil which hates
you?

Jac. Fos. The soil!—Oh no, it is the seed of the soil
Which persecutes me; but my native earth
Will take me as a mother to her arms.
I ask no more than a Venetian grave,
A dungeon, what they will, so it be here.

Enter an Officer.

Offi. Bring in the prisoner!

Guard. Signor, you hear the order.

Jac. Fos. Ay, I am used to such a summons: 't is
The third time they have tortured me:—then lend me
Thine arm. [To the Guard.

Offi. Take mine, sir; 't is my duty to
Be nearest to your person.

Jac. Fos. You!—you are he
Who yesterday presided o'er my pangs—
Away!—I'll walk alone.

Offi. As you please, signor;
The sentence was not of my signing, but
I dared not disobey the Council when
They——

Jac. Fos. Bade thee stretch me on their horrid engine.
I pray thee touch me not—that is, just now;
The time will come they will renew that order,
But keep off from me till 't is issued. As
I look upon thy hands my curdling limbs
Quiver with the anticipated wrenching,
And the cold drops strain through my brow, as if——
But onward—I have borne it—I can bear it.—
How looks my father?

Offi. With his wonted aspect.

Jac. Fos. So does the garth, and sky, the blue of ocean,
The brightness of our city, and her domes,
The mirth of her Piazza, even now
Its merry hum of nations pierces here,
Even here, into these chambers of the unknown
Who govern, and the unknown and the unnumber'd

Judged and destroy'd in silence,—all things wear
The self-same aspect, to my very sire!
Nothing can sympathise with Foscari,
Not even a Foscari.—Sir, I attend you.

[*Exeunt* JACOPO FOSCARI, *Officer, &c.*

Enter MEMMO and another Senator.

Mem. He's gone—we are too late:—think you “the
Ten”

Will sit for any length of time to-day?

Sen. They say the prisoner is most obdurate,
Persisting in his first avowal; but
More I know not.

Mem. And that is much; the secrets
Of yon terrific chamber are as hidden
From us, the premier nobles of the state,
As from the people.

Sen. Save the wonted rumours,
Which—like the tales of specues, that are rife
Near ruin'd buildings—never have been proved,
Nor wholly disbelieved: men know as little
Of the state's real acts as of the grave's
Unfathom'd mysteries.

Mem. But with length of time
We gain a step in knowledge, and I look
Forward to be one day of the decemvirs.

Sen. Or Doge?

Mem. Why, no; not if I can avoid it.

Sen. 'Tis the first station of the state, and may
Be lawfully desired, and lawfully
Attain'd by noble aspirants.

Mem. To such
I leave it; though born noble, my ambition
Is limited: I'd rather be an unit
Of an united and imperial “Ten,”
Than shine a lonely though a gilded cipher.—
Whom have we here? the wife of Foscari?

Enter MARINA, with a female Attendant.

Mar. What, no one?—I am wrong, there still are two;
But they are senators.

Mem. Most noble lady,
Command us.

Mar. *I command!*—Alas! my life
Has been one long entreaty, and a vain one.

Mem. I understand thee, but I must not answer.

Mar. (*fiercely*). True—none dare answer here save on
the rack,

Or question save those——

Mem. (*interrupting her.*) High-born dame! bethink thee
Where thou now art.

Mar. Where I now am!—It was
My husband's father's palace.

Mem. The Duke's palace.

Mar. And his son's prison!—True, I have not forgot it;
And if there were no other nearer, bitterer
Remembrances, would thank the illustrious Memmo
For pointing out the pleasures of the place.

Mem. Be calm!

Mar. (*looking up towards heaven*). I am; but oh, thou
eternal God!

Canst thou continue so, with such a world?

Mem. Thy husband yet may be absolved.

Mar.

He is,

In heaven. I pray you, signor senator,
Speak not of that; you are a man of office,
So is the Doge; he has a son at stake
Now, at this moment, and I have a husband,
Or had; they are there within, or were at least
An hour since, face to face, as judge and culprit:
Will he condemn him?

Mem.

I trust not.

Mar.

But if

He does not, there are those will sentence both.

Mem. They can.

Mar. And with them power and will are one
In wickedness:—my husband's lost!

Mem.

Not so;

Justice is judge in Venice.

Mar.

If it were so,

There now would be no Venice. But let it
Live on, so the good die not, till the hour
Of nature's summons; but "the Ten's" is quicker,
And we must wait on't. Ah! a voice of wail!

Sen. Hark!

[*A faint cry within.*]

Mem.

'T was a cry of—

Mar. No, no ; not my husband's—
Not Foscari's.

Mem. The voice was—

Mar. *Not his : no.*
He shriek ! No ; that should be his father's part,
Not his—not his—he 'll die in silence.

[*A faint groan again within.*

Mem. What !
Again ?

Mar. *His voice ! it seem'd so : I will not*
Believe it. Should he shrink, I cannot cease
To love ; but—no—no—no—it must have been
A fearful pang, which wrung a groan from him.

Sen. And, feeling for thy husband's woes, wouldst thou
Have him bear more than mortal pain in silence ?

Mar. We all must bear our tortures. I have not
Left barren the great house of Foscari,
Though they sweep both the Doge and son from life ;
I have endured as much in giving life
To those who will succeed them, as they can
In leaving it : but mine were joyful pangs :
And yet they wrung me till I *could* have shriek'd,
But did not ; for my hope was to bring forth
Heroes, and would not welcome them with tears.

Mem. All's silent now.

Mar. Perhaps all's over ; but
I will not deem it : he hath nerved himself,
And now defies them.

Enter an Officer hastily.

Mem. How now, friend, what seek you ?

Offi. A leech. The prisoner has fainted. [*Exit Officer.*

Mem. Lady,

"I were better to retire.

Sen. (*offering to assist her*). I pray thee do so.

Mar. Off ! I will tend him.

Mem. You ! Remember, lady !
Ingress is given to none within those chambers,
Except "the Ten," and their familiars.

Mar. Well,
I know that none who enter there return
As they have enter'd—many never ; but
They shall not balk my entrance.

Mem. Alas! this
Is but to expose yourself to harsh repulse,
And worse suspense.

Mar. Who shall oppose me?

Mem. They
Whose duty 't is to do so.

Mar. 'T is *their* duty
To trample on all human feelings, all
Ties which bind man to man, to emulate
The fiends who will one day requite them in
Variety of torturing! Yet I'll pass.

Mem. It is impossible.

Mar. That shall be tried.
Despair defies even despotism: there is
That in my heart would make its way through hosts
With levell'd spears; and think you a few jailors
Shall put me from my path? Give me, then, way;
This is the Doge's palace: I am wife
Of the Duke's son, the *innocent* Duke's son,
And they shall hear this!

Mem. It will only serve
More to exasperate his judges.

Mar. What
Are judges who give way to anger? they
Who do so are assassins. Give me way.

[*Exit MARINA.*

Sen. Poor lady!

Mem. 'T is mere desperation: she
Will not be admitted o'er the threshold.

Sen. And
Even if she be so, cannot save her husband.
But see, the officer returns.

[*The Officer passes over the stage with another person.*

Mem. I hardly
Thought that "the Ten" had even this touch of pity,
Or would permit assistance to this sufferer.

Sen. Pity! Is 't pity to recall to feeling
The wretch too happy to escape to death
By the compassionate trance, poor nature's last
Resource against the tyranny of pain?

Mem. I marvel they condemn him not at once.

Sen. That's not their policy: they'd have him live,
Because he fears not death; and banish him,

Because all earth, except his native land,
To him is one wide prison, and each breath
Of foreign air he draws seems a slow poison,
Consuming but not killing.

Mem.

Circumstance

Confirms his crimes, but he avows them not.

Sen. None, save the Letter, which he says was written,
Address'd to Milan's duke, in the full knowledge
That it would fall into the senate's hands,
And thus he should be re-convey'd to Venice.

Mem. But as a culprit.

Sen.

Yes, but to his country;

And that was all he sought,—so he avouches.

Mem. The accusation of the bribes was proved.

Sen. Not clearly, and the charge of homicide
Has been annull'd by the death-bed confession
Of Nicolas Erizzo, who slew the late
Chief of "the Ten."

Mem.

Then why not clear him?

Sen.

That

They ought to answer; for it is well known
That Almore Donato, as I said,
Was slain by Erizzo for private vengeance.

Mem. There must be more in this strange process than
The apparent crimes of the accused disclose—
But here come two of "the Ten;" let us retire.

[*Exeunt MEMMO and Senator.*]

Enter LORIDANO and BARBARIGO.

Bar. (*addressing LOR.*). That were too much: believe
me, 't was not meet
The trial should go further at this moment.

Lor. And so the Council must break up, and Justice
Pause in her full career, because a woman
Breaks in on our deliberations?

Bar.

No,

That's not the cause; you saw the prisoner's state.

Lor. And had he not recover'd?

Bar.

To relapse

Upon the least renewal.

Lor.

'T was not tried.

Bar. 'T is vain to murmur; the majority
In council were against you.

Lor. Thanks to you, sir,
And the old ducal dotard, who combined
The worthy voices which o'er-ruled my own.

Bar. I am a judge; but must confess that part
Of our stern duty which prescribes the Question,
And bids us sit and see its sharp infliction,
Makes me wish——

Lor. What?

Bar. That *you* would *sometimes* feel,
As I do always.

Lor. Go to, you're a child,
Infirm of feeling as of purpose, blown
About by every breath, shook by a sigh,
And melted by a tear—a precious judge
For Venice! and a worthy states-man to
Be partner in my policy.

Bar. He shed
No tears.

Lor. He cried out twice.

Bar. A saint had done so,
Even with the crown of glory in his eye,
At such inhuman artifice or pain.
As was forced on him; but he did not cry
For pity; not a word nor groan escaped him,
And those two shrieks were not in supplication,
But wrung from pangs, and follow'd by no prayers.

Lor. He mutter'd many times between his teeth,
But inarticulately.

Bar. That I heard not;
You stood more near him.

Lor. I did so.

Bar. Methought
To my surprise too, you were touch'd with mercy,
And were the first to call out for assistance
When he was failing.

Lor. I believed that swoon
His last.

Bar. And have I not oft heard thee name
His and his father's death your nearest wish?

Lor. If he dies innocent, that is to say,
With his guilt unavow'd, he'll be lamented.

Bar. What, wouldst thou slay his memory?

Lor. Wouldst thou have

His state descend to his children, as it must,
If he die unattainted?

Bar. War with *them* too?

Lor. With all their house, till theirs or mine are nothing.

Bar. And the deep agony of his pale wife,
And the repress'd convulsion of the high
And princely brow of his old father, which
Broke forth in a slight shuddering, though rarely,
Or in some clammy drops, soon wiped away
In stern serenity; these moved you not?

[*Exit* LOREDANO.

He's silent in his hate, as Foscari
Was in his suffering; and the poor wretch moved me
More by his silence than a thousand outcries
Could have effected. 'T was a dreadful sight
When his distracted wife broke through into
The hall of our tribunal, and beheld
What we could scarcely look upon, long used
To such sights. I must think no more of this,
Lest I forget in this compassion for
Our foes, their former injuries, and lose
The hold of vengeance Loredano plans
For him and me; but mine would be content
With lesser retribution than he thirsts for,
And I would mitigate his deeper hatred
To milder thoughts; but for the present, Foscari
Has a short hourly respite, granted at
The instance of the elders of the Council,
Moved doubtless by his wife's appearance in
The hall, and his own sufferings.—Lo! they come:
How feeble and forlorn! I cannot bear
To look on them again in this extremity:
I'll hence, and try to soften Loredano.

[*Exit* BARBARIGO.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Hall in the DOGE's palace.*

The DOGE and a SENATOR.

Sen. Is it your pleasure to sign the report
Now, or postpone it till to-morrow?

Doge.

Now;

I overlook'd it yesterday: it wants
Merely the signature. Give me the pen—

[*The DOGE sits down and signs the paper.*]

There, signor.

Sen. (looking at the paper.) You have forgot; it is not
sign'd

Doge. Not sign'd? Ah, I perceive my eyes begin
To wax more weak with age. I did not see
That I had dipp'd the pen without effect.

*Sen. (dipping the pen into the ink, and placing the paper
before the DOGE).* Your hand, too, shakes, my lord:
allow me, thus—

Doge. 'T is done, I thank you.

Sen.

Thus the act confirm'd

By you and by "the Ten" gives peace to Venice.

Doge. 'T is long since she enjoy'd it: may it be
As long ere she resume her arms!

Sen.

'T is almost

Thirty-four years of nearly ceaseless warfare

With the Turk, or the powers of Italy;

The state had need of some repose.

Doge.

No doubt:

I found her Queen of Ocean, and I leave her

Lady of Lombardy; it is a comfort

That I have added to her diadem

The gems of Brescia and Ravenna; Crema

And Bergamo no less are hers; her realm

By land has grown by thus much in my reign,

While her sea-sway has not shrunk.

Sen.

'T is most true,

And merits all our country's gratitude.

Doge. Perhaps so.

Sen.

Which should be made manifest.

Doge. I've not complain'd, sir.

Sen.

My good lord, forgive me.

Doge. For what?

Sen.

My heart bleeds for you.

Doge.

For me, signor?

Sen. And for your—

Doge.

Stop!

Sen.

It must have way, my lord:

I have too many duties towards you

And all your house, for past and present kindness,
Not to feel deeply for your son.

Doge.

Was this

In your commission?

Sen.

What, my lord?

Doge.

This prattle

Of things you know not: but the treaty's sign'd;
Return with it to them who sent you.

Sen.

I

Obeys. I had in charge, too, from the Council,
That you would fix an hour for their reunion.

Doge. Say when they will—now, even at this moment,
If it so please them: I am the state's servant.

Sen. They would accord some time for your repose.

Doge. I have no repose, that is, none which shall cause
The loss of an hour's time unto the state.

Let them meet when they will, I shall be found

Where I should be, and what I have been ever.

[*Exit SENATOR. The DOGE remains in silence.*]

Enter an Attendant.

Att. Prince!

Doge.

Say on.

Att.

The illustrious lady Foscari

Requests an audience.

Doge.

Bid her enter. Poor

Marina!

[*Exit Attendant. The DOGE remains in silence as before.*]

Enter MARINA.

Mar. I have ventured, father, on
Your privacy.

Doge.

I have none from you, my child.

Command my time, when not commanded by
The state.

Mar.

I wish'd to speak to you of *him*.

Doge. Your husband?

Mar.

And your son.

Doge.

Proceed, my daughter!

Mar. I had obtain'd permission from "the Ten"
To attend my husband for a limited number
Of hours.

Doge.

You had so.

Mar.

'T is revoked.

Doge.

By whom?

Mar. "The Ten."—When we had reach'd "the Bridge of Sighs,"

Which I prepared to pass with Foscari,
 The gloomy guardian of that passage first
 Demurr'd: a messenger was sent back to
 "The Ten;"—but as the court no longer sate,
 And no permission had been given in writing,
 I was thrust back, with the assurance that
 Until that high tribunal re-assembled
 The dungeon walls must still divide us.

Doge.

True,

The form has been omitted in the haste
 With which the court adjourn'd; and till it meets,
 'T is dubious.

Mar.

Till it meets! and when it meets,
 They'll torture him again; and he and I
 Must purchase by renewal of the rack
 The interview of husband and of wife,
 The holiest tie beneath the heavens!—Oh God!
 Dost thou see this?

Doge.

Child—child—

Mar. (*abruptly*).

Call me not "child!"

You soon will have no children—you deserve none—
 You, who can talk thus calmly of a son
 In circumstances which would call forth tears
 Of blood from Spartans! Though these did not weep
 Their boys who died in battle, is it written
 That they beheld them perish piecemeal, nor
 Stretch'd forth a hand to save them?

Doge.

You behold me:

I cannot weep—I would I could; but if
 Each white hair on this head were a young life
 This ducal cap the diadem of earth,
 This ducal ring with which I wed the waves
 A talisman to still them—I'd give all
 For him.

Mar. With less he surely might be saved.

Doge. That answer only shows you know not Venice.
 Alas! how should you? she knows not herself,
 In all her mystery. Hear me—they who aim
 At Foscari, aim no less at his father;

The sire's destruction would not save the son ;
They work by different means to the same end,
And that is—but they have not conquer'd yet.

Mar. But they have crush'd.

Doge. Nor crush'd as yet—I live.

Mar. And your son,—how long will he live?

Doge. I trust,

For all that yet is past, as many years
And happier than his father. The rash boy,
With womanish impatience to return,
Hath ruin'd all by that detected letter :
A high crime, which I neither can deny
Nor palliate, as parent or as Duke :
Had he but borne a little, little longer,
His Candiote exile, I had hopes—he has quench'd
them—

He must return.

Mar. To exile?

Doge. I have said it.

Mar. And can I not go with him?

Doge. You well know

This prayer of yours was twice denied before
By the assembled " Ten," and hardly now
Will be accorded to a third request,
Since aggravated errors on the part
Of your lord renders them still more austere.

Mar. Austere? Atrocious ! The old human fiends,
With one foot in the grave, with dim eyes, strange
To tears save drops of dotage, with long white
And scanty hairs, and shaking hands, and heads
As palsied as their hearts are hard, they counsel,
Cabal, and put men's lives out, as if life
Were no more than the feelings long extinguish'd
In their accursed bosoms.

Doge. You know not—

Mar. I do—I do—and so should you, methinks—
That these are demons : could it be else that
Men, who have been of women born and suckled—
Who have loved, or talk'd at least of love—have given
Their hands in sacred vows—have danced their babes
Upon their knees, perhaps have mourn'd above them—
In pain, in peril, or in death—who are,
Or were at least in seeming, human, could

Do as they've done by yours, and you yourself——

You, who abet them?

Doge. I forgive this, for

You know not what you say.

Mar. You know it well,

And feel it nothing.

Doge. I have borne so much,

That words have ceased to shake me.

Mar. Oh, no doubt!

You have seen your son's blood flow, and your flesh
And after that, what are a woman's words? [shook not;
No more than woman's tears, that they should shake you.

Doge. Woman, this clamorous grief of thine, I tell thee,
Is no more in the balance weigh'd with that
Which——but I pity thee, my poor Marina!

Mar. Pity my husband, or I cast it from me;
Pity thy son! *Thou* pity!—'T is a word
Strange to thy heart—how came it on thy lips?

Doge. I must bear these reproaches, though they wrong
Couldst thou but read—— [me.

Mar. 'T is not upon thy brow,
Nor in thine eyes, nor in thine acts,—where then
Should I behold this sympathy? or shall?

Doge. (*pointing downwards*). There.

Mar. In the earth?

Doge. To which I'm tending: when
It lies upon this heart, far lightlier, though
Loaded with marble, than the thoughts which press it
Now, you will know me better.

Mar. Are you, then,
Indeed, thus to be pitied?

Doge. Pitied! None
Shall ever use that base word, with which men
Cloak their soul's hoarded triumph, as a spy one
To mingle with my name; that name shall be,
As far as I have borne it, what it was
When I received it.

Mar. But for the poor children
Of him thou canst not, or thou wilt not, save,
You were the last to bear it.

Doge. Would it were so!
Better for him he never had been born;
Better for me.—I've seen our house dishonour'd.

Mar. That's false ! A truer, nobler, trustier heart,
 More loving or more loyal, never beat
 Within a human breast. I would not change
 My exiled, persecuted, mangled husband,
 Oppress'd but not disgraced, crush'd, overwhelm'd,
 Alive, or dead, for prince or paladin
 In story or in fable, with a world
 To back his suit. Dishonour'd !—*he* dishonour'd !
 I tell thee, Doge, 't is Venice is dishonour'd !
 His name shall be her foulest, worst reproach,
 For what he suffers, not for what he did.
 'T is ye who are all traitors, tyrant !—ye !
 Did you but love your country like this victim
 Who totters back in chains to tortures, and
 Submits to all things rather than to exile,
 You'd fling yourselves before him, and implore
 His grace for your enormous guilt.

Doge. He was
 Indeed all you have said. I better bore
 The deaths of the two sons Heaven took from me,
 Than Jacopo's disgrace.

Mar. That word again ?

Doge. Has he not been condemn'd ?

Mar. Is none but guilt so ?

Doge. Time may restore his memory— I would hope so
 He was my pride, my—but 't is useless now—
 I am not given to tears, but wept for joy
 When he was born : those drops were ominous.

Mar. I say he's innocent ! And were he not so,
 Is our own blood and kin to shrink from us
 In fatal moments ?

Doge. I shrank not from him :
 But I have other duties than a father's ;
 The state would not dispense me from those duties ;
 Twice I demanded it, but was refused :
 They must then be fulfill'd.

Enter an Attendant.

Att. A message from
 "The Ten."

Doge. Who bears it ?

Att. Noble Loredano.

Doge. He !—but admit him. [Exit Attendant.]

Mar. Must I then retire?

Doge. Perhaps it is not requisite, if this
Concerns your husband, and if not—Well, signor,
Your pleasure? [*To LOREDANO entering.*]

Lor. I bear that of "the Ten."

Doge. They
Have chosen well their envoy.

Lor. 'T is *their* choice
Which leads me here.

Doge. It does their wisdom honour,
And no less to their courtesy.—Proceed.

Lor. We have decided.

Doge. We?

Lor. "The Ten" in council.

Doge. What! have they met again, and met without
Apprising me?

Lor. They wish'd to spare your feelings,
No less than age.

Doge. That's new—when spared they either?
I thank them, notwithstanding.

Lor. You know well
That they have power to act at their discretion,
With or without the presence of the Doge.

Doge. 'T is some years since I learn'd this, long before
I became Doge, or dream'd of such advancement.
You need not school me, signor; I sate in
That council when you were a young patrician.

Lor. True, in my father's time; I have heard him and
The admiral, his brother, say as much.
Your highness may remember them; they both
Died suddenly.

Doge. And if they did so, better
So die than live on lingeringly in pain. [*out.*]

Lor. No doubt: yet most men like to live their days

Doge. And did not they?

Lor. The grave knows best: they died,
As I said, suddenly.

Doge. Is that so strange,
That you repeat the word emphatically?

Lor. So far from strange, that never was there death
In my mind half so natural as theirs.
Think you not so?

Doge. What should I think of mortals?

Lor. That they have mortal foes.

Doge. I understand you ;
Your sires were mine, and you are heir in all things.

Lor. You best know if I should be so.

Doge. I do.
Your fathers were my foes, and I have heard
Foul rumours were abroad ; I have also read
Their epitaph, attributing their deaths
To poison. 'T is perhaps as true as most
Inscriptions upon tombs, and yet no less
A fable.

Lor. Who dares say so ?

Doge. I !—'T is true
Your fathers were mine enemies, as bitter
As their son e'er can be, and I no less
Was theirs ; but I was *openly* their foe :
I never work'd by plot in council, nor
Cabal in commonwealth, nor secret means
Of practice against life by steel or drug.
The proof is your existence.

Lor. I fear not.

Doge. You have no cause, being what I am ; but were I
That you would have me thought, you long ere now
Were past the sense of fear. Hate on ; I care not.

Lor. I never yet knew that a noble's life
In Venice had to dread a Doge's frown,
That is, by open means.

Doge. But I, good signor,
Am, or at least *was*, more than a mere duke,
In blood, in mind, in means ; and that they know
Who dreaded to elect me, and have since
Striven all they dare to weigh me down : be sure,
Before or since that period, had I held you
At so much price as to require your absence,
A word of mine had set such spirits to work
As would have made you nothing. But in all things
I have observed the strictest reverence ;
Not for the laws alone, for those *you* have strain'd
(I do not speak of *you* but as a single
Voice of the many) somewhat beyond what
I could enforce for my authority,
Were I disposed to brawl ; but, as I said,
I have observed with veneration, like

A priest's for the high altar, even unto
 The sacrifice of my own blood and quiet,
 Safety, and all save honour, the decrees,
 The health, the pride, and welfare of the state.
 And now, sir, to your business.

Lor. 'T is decreed,
 That, without further repetition of
 The Question, or continuance of the trial,
 Which only tends to show how stubborn guilt is
 ("The Ten," dispensing with the stricter law
 Which still prescribes the Question till a full
 Confession, and the prisoner partly having
 Avow'd his crime in not denying that
 The letter to the Duke of Milan's his),
 James Foscari return to banishment,
 And sail in the same galley which convey'd him.

Mar. Thank God! At least they will not drag him
 more

Before that horrible tribunal. Would he
 But think so, to my mind the happiest doom,
 Not he alone, but all who dwell here, could
 Desire, were to escape from such a land.

Doge. That is not a Venetian thought, my daughter.

Mar. No, 't was too human. May I share his exile?

Lor. Of this "the Ten" said nothing.

Mar. So I thought!
 That were too human, also. But it was not
 Inhibited?

Lor. It was not named.

Mar. (to the Doge). Then, father,
 Surely you can obtain or grant me thus much:

[To LOREDANO.]

And you, sir, not oppose my prayer to be
 Permitted to accompany my husband.

Doge. I will endeavour.

Mar. And you, signor?

Lor. Lady!

'T is not for me to anticipate the pleasure
 Of the tribunal.

Mar. Pleasure! what a word
 To use for the decrees of——

Doge. Daughter, know you
 In what a presence you pronounce these things?

Mar. A prince's and his subject's.

Lor. Subject!

Mar. Oh!

It galls you :—well, you are his equal, as
You think ; but that you are not, nor would be,
Were he a peasant :—well, then, you're a prince,
A princely noble ; and what then am I ?

Lor. The offspring of a noble house.

Mar. And wedded

To one as noble. What, or whose, then, is
The presence that should silence my free thoughts ?

Lor. The presence of your husband's judges.

Doge. And

The deference due even to the lightest word
That falls from those who rule in Venice.

Mar. Keep

Those maxims for your mass of scared mechanics,
Your merchants, your Dalmatian and Greek slaves,
Your tributaries, your dumb citizens,
And mask'd nobility, your sbirri, and
Your spies, your galley and your other slaves,
To whom your midnight carryings off and drownings,
Your dungeons next the palace roofs, or under
The water's level ; your mysterious meetings,
And unknown dooms, and sudden executions,
Your " Bridge of Sighs," your strangling chamber, and
Your torturing instruments, have made ye seem
The beings of another and worse world !

Keep such for them : I fear ye not. I know ye ;
Have known and proved your worst, in the infernal
Process of my poor husband ! Treat me as
Ye treated him :—you did so, in so dealing
With him. Then what have I to fear *from* you,
Even if I were of fearful nature, which
I trust I am not ?

Doge. You hear, she speaks wildly.

Mar. Not wisely, yet not wildly.

Lor. Lady ! words

Utter'd within these walls I bear no further
Than to the threshold, saving such as pass
Between the Duke and me on the state's service.
Doge ! have you aught in answer ?

Doge. Something from
The Doge ; it may be also from a parent.

Lor. My mission *here* is to the *Doge*.

Doge. Then say
The Doge will choose his own ambassador,
Or state in person what is meet ; and for
The father——

Lor. I remember *mine*.—Farewell !
I kiss the hands of the illustrious lady,
And bow me to the Duke. [*Exit LOREDANO.*]

Mar. Are you content ?

Doge. I am what you behold.

Mar. And that's a mystery.

Doge. All things are so to mortals ; who can read them
Save he who made ? or, if they can, the few
And gifted spirits, who have studied long
That loathsome volume—man, and pored upon
Those black and bloody leaves, his heart and brain,
But learn a magic which recoils upon
The adept who pursues it : all the sins
We find in others, nature made our own ;
All our advantages are those of fortune ;
Birth, wealth, health, beauty, are her accidents,
And when we cry out against Fate, 't were well
We should remember Fortune can take nought
Save what she *gave*—the rest was nakedness,
And lusts, and appetites, and vanities,
The universal heritage, to battle
With as we may, and least in humblest stations.
Where hunger swallows all in one low want,
And the original ordinance, that man
Must sweat for his poor pittance, keeps all passions
Aloof, save fear of famine ! All is low,
And false, and hollow—clay from first to last,
The prince's urn no less than potter's vessel.
Our fame is in men's breath, our lives upon
Less than their breath ; our durance upon days,
Our days on seasons ; our whole being on
Something which is not *us* !—So, we are slaves,
The greatest as the meanest—nothing rests
Upon our will ; the will itself no less
Depends upon a straw than on a storm ;
And when we think we lead, we are most led,

And still towards death, a thing which comes as much
Without our act or choice as birth, so that
Methinks we must have sinn'd in some old world,
And *this* is hell : the best is, that it is not
Eternal.

Mar. These are things we cannot judge
On earth.

Doge. And how then shall we judge each other,
Who are all earth, and I, who am call'd upon
'To judge my son? I have administer'd
My country faithfully—victoriously—
I dare them to the proof, the *chart* of what
She was and is : my reign has doubled realms ;
And, in reward, the gratitude of Venice
Has left, or is about to leave, *me* single.

Mar. And Foscari? I do not think of such things,
So I be left with him.

Doge. You shall be so ;
Thus much they cannot well deny.

Mar. And if
They should, I will fly with him.

Doge. That can ne'er be.
And whither would you fly?

Mar. I know not, reckon not—
To Syria, Egypt, to the Ottoman—
Anywhere, where we might respire unfetter'd,
And live nor girt by spies, nor liable
To edicts of inquisitors of state.

Doge. What, wouldst thou have a renegade for husband,
And turn him into traitor?

Mar. He is none !
The country is the traitress, which thrusts forth
Her best and bravest from her. Tyranny
Is far the worst of treasons. Dost thou deem
None rebels except subjects? The prince who
Neglects or violates his trust is more
A brigand than the robber-chief.

Doge. I cannot
Charge me with such a breach of faith.

Mar. No ; thou
Observ'st, obey'st such laws as make old Draco's
A code of mercy by comparison.

Doge. I found the law ; I did not make it. Were I

A subject, still I might find parts and portions
Fit for amendment ; but as prince, I never
Would change, for the sake of my house, the charter
Left by our fathers.

Mar. Did they make it for
The ruin of their children ?

Doge. Under such laws, Venice
Has risen to what she is—a state to rival
In deeds, and days, and sway, and, let me add,
In glory (for we have had Roman spirits
Amongst us), all that history has bequeath'd
Of Rome and Carthage in their best times, when
The people sway'd by senates.

Mar. Rather say,
Groan'd under the stern oligarchs.

Doge. Perhaps so ;
But yet subdued the world : in such a state
An individual, be he richest of
Such rank as is permitted, or the meanest,
Without a name, is alike nothing, when
The policy, irrevocably tending
To one great end, must be maintain'd in vigour.

Mar. This means that you are more a Doge than father.

Doge. It means, I am more citizen than either.
If we had not for many centuries
Had thousands of such citizens, and shall,
I trust, have still such, Venice were no city.

Mar. Accursed be the city where the laws
Would stifle nature's !

Doge. Had I as many sons
As I have years, I would have given them all,
Not without feeling, but I would have given them
To the state's service, to fulfil her wishes
On the flood, in the field, or, if it must be,
As it, alas ! has been, to ostracism,
Exile, or chains, or whatsoever worse
She might decree.

Mar. And this is patriotism ?
To me it seems the worst barbarity.
Let me seek out my husband : the sage " Ten,"
With all its jealousy, will hardly war
So far with a weak woman as deny me
A moment's access to his dungeon.

Doge. I'll
So far take on myself, as order that
You may be admitted.

Mar. And what shall I say
To Foscari from his father?

Doge. That he obey
The laws.

Mar. And nothing more? Will you not see him
Ere he depart? It may be the last time.

Doge. The last!—my boy!—the last time I shall see
My last of children! Tell him I will come. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The Prison of* JACOPO FOSCARI.

Jac. Fos. (solus). No light, save yon faint gleam which
shows me walls
Which never echo'd but to sorrow's sounds,
The sigh of long imprisonment, the step
Of feet on which the iron clank'd, the groan
Of death, the imprecation of despair!
And yet for this I have return'd to Venice,
With some faint hope, 't is true, that time, which wears
The marble down, had worn away the hate
Of men's hearts; but I knew them not, and here
Must I consume my own, which never beat
For Venice but with such a yearning as
The dove has for her distant nest, when wheeling
High in the air on her return to greet
Her callow brood. What letters are these which
[*Approaching the wall.*]
Are scrawl'd along the inexorable wall?
Will the gleam let me trace them? Ah! the names
Of my sad predecessors in this place,
The dates of their despair, the brief words of
A grief too great for many. This stone page
Holds like an epitaph their history:
And the poor captive's tale is graven on
His dungeon barrier, like the lover's record
Upon the bark of some tall tree, which bears
His own and his beloved's name. Alas!

I recognise some names familiar to me,
 And blighted like to mine, which I will add,
 Fittest for such a chronicle as this,
 Which only can be read, as writ, by wretches.
[He engraves his name.]

Enter a Familiar of "the Ten."

Fam. I bring you food.

Jac. Fos. I pray you set it down;
 I am past hunger: but my lips are parch'd—
 The water!

Fam. There.

Jac. Fos. (after drinking). I thank you: I am better.

Fam. I am commanded to inform you that
 Your further trial is postponed.

Jac. Fos. Till when?

Fam. I know not.—It is also in my orders
 That your illustrious lady be admitted.

Jac. Fos. Ah! they relent, then—I had ceased to
 hope it:

'T was time.

Enter MARINA.

Mar. My best beloved!

Jac. Fos. (embracing her). My true wife,
 And only friend! What happiness!

Mar. We'll part
 No more.

Jac. Fos. How! wouldst thou share a dungeon?

Mar. Ay,
 The rack, the grave, all—anything with thee,
 But the tomb last of all, for there we shall
 Be ignorant of each other, yet I will
 Share that—all things except new separation;
 It is too much to have survived the first.
 How dost thou? How are those worn limbs? Alas!
 Why do I ask? Thy paleness—

Jac. Fos. 'T is the joy
 Of seeing thee again so soon, and so
 Without expectancy, has sent the blood
 Back to my heart, and left my cheeks like thine,
 For thou art pale too, my Marina!

Mar.

'Tis

The gloom of this eternal cell, which never
Knew sunbeam, and the sallow sullen glare
Of the familiar's torch, which seems akin
To darkness more than light, by lending to
The dungeon vapours its bituminous smoke,
Which cloud whate'er we gaze on, even thine eyes—
No, not thine eyes—they sparkle—how they sparkle!

Jac. Fos. And thine!—but I am blinded by the torch.*Mar.* As I had been without it. Couldst thou see here?*Jac. Fos.* Nothing at first, but use and time had
taught me

Familiarity with what was darkness;
And the grey twilight of such glimmerings as
Glide through the crevices made by the winds
Was kinder to mine eyes than the full sun,
When gorgeously o'ergilding any towers
Save those of Venice: but a moment ere
Thou camest hither I was busy writing.

Mar. What?*Jac. Fos.* My name: look, 't is there—recorded next
The name of him who here preceded me,
If dungeon dates say true.*Mar.*

And what of him?

Jac. Fos. These walls are silent of men's ends; they only
Seem to hint shrewdly of them. Such stern walls
Were never piled on high save o'er the dead,
Or those who soon must be so.—*What of him?*
Thou askest.—What of me? may soon be ask'd,
With the like answer—doubt and dreadful surmise—
Unless thou tell'st my tale.*Mar.**I speak of thee!**Jac. Fos.* And wherefore not? All then shall speak
of me:

The tyranny of silence is not lasting,
And, though events be hidden, just men's groans
Will burst all cerement, even a living grave's!
I do not *doubt* my memory, but my life;
And neither do I fear.

Mar.

Thy life is safe.

Jac. Fos. And liberty?*Mar.*

The mind should make its own.

Jac. Fos. That has a noble sound; but 't is a sound,

A music most impressive, but too transient :
 The mind is much, but is not all. The mind
 Hath nerved me to endure the risk of death,
 And torture positive, far worse than death
 (If death be a deep sleep), without a groan,
 Or with a cry which rather shamed my judges
 Than me ; but 't is not all, for there are things
 More woful—such as this small dungeon, where
 I may breathe many years.

Mar. Alas ! and this
 Small dungeon is all that belongs to thee
 Of this wide realm, of which thy sire is prince.

Jac. Fos. That thought would scarcely aid me to endure
 My doom is common ; many are in dungeons, [it.
 But none like mine, so near their father's palace ;
 But then my heart is sometimes high, and hope
 Will stream along those moted rays of light
 Peopled with dusty atoms, which afford
 Our only day : for, save the gaoler's torch,
 And a strange firefly, which was quickly caught
 Last night in yon enormous spider's net,
 I ne'er saw aught here like a ray. Alas !
 I know if mind may bear us up, or no,
 For I have such, and shown it before men ;
 It sinks in solitude ; my soul is social.

Mar. I will be with thee.

Jac. Fos. Ah ! if it were so !
 But *that* they never granted—nor will grant,
 And I shall be alone : no men ; no books—
 Those lying likenesses of lying men.
 I ask'd for even those outlines of their kind,
 Which they term annals, history, what you will,
 Which men bequeath as portraits, and they were
 Refused me,—so these walls have been my study,
 More faithful pictures of Venetian story,
 With all their blank, or dismal stains, than is
 The Hall not far from hence, which bears on high
 Hundreds of doges, and their deeds and dates.

Mar. I come to tell thee the result of their
 Last council on thy doom.

Jac. Fos. I know it—look !

[*He points to his limbs, as referring to the Question
 which he had undergone.*]

Mar. No—no—no more of that: even they relent
From that atrocity.

Jac. Fos. What then?

Mar. That you
Return to Candia.

Jac. Fos. Then my last hope's gone.
I could endure my dungeon, for 't was Venice;
I could support the torture, there was something
In my native air that buoy'd my spirits up
Like a ship on the ocean toss'd by storms,
But proudly still bestriding the high waves,
And holding on its course; but *there*, afar,
In that accursed isle of slaves and captives,
And unbelievers, like a stranded wreck,
My very soul seem'd mouldering in my bosom
And piecemeal I shall perish, if remanded.

Mar. And *here*?

Jac. Fos. At once—by better means, as briefer.
What! would they even deny me my sire's sepulchre,
As well as home and heritage?

Mar. My husband!
I have sued to accompany thee hence,
And not so hopelessly. This love of thine
For an ungrateful and tyrannic soil
Is passion, and not patriotism; for me,
So I could see thee with a quiet aspect,
And the sweet freedom of the earth and air,
I would not cavil about climes or regions.
This crowd of palaces and prisons is not
A paradise; its first inhabitants
Were wretched exiles.

Jac. Fos. Well I know *how* wretched!

Mar. And yet you see how, from their banishment
Before the Tartar into these salt isles,
Their antique energy of mind, all that
Remain'd of Rome for their inheritance,
Created by degrees an ocean Rome;
And shall an evil, which so often leads
To good, depress thee thus?

Jac. Fos. Had I gone forth
From my own land, like the old patriarchs, seeking
Another region, with their flocks and herds;
Had I been cast out like the Jews from Zion,

Or like our fathers, driven by Attila
 From fertile Italy, to barren islets,
 I would have given some tears to my late country,
 And many thoughts ; but afterwards address'd
 Myself with those about me, to create
 A new home and fresh state : perhaps I could
 Have borne this—though I know not.

Mar.

Wherefore not ?

It was the lot of millions, and must be
 The fate of myriads more.

Jac. Fos.

Ay—we but hear

Of the survivors' toil in their new lands,
 Their numbers and success ; but who can number
 The hearts which broke in silence at that parting,
 Or after their departure ; of that malady
 Which calls up green and native fields to view
 From the rough deep, with such identity
 To the poor exile's fever'd eye, that he
 Can scarcely be restrain'd from treading them ?
 That melody, which out of tones and tunes
 Collects such pasture for the longing sorrow
 Of the sad mountaineer, when far away
 From his snow canopy of cliffs and clouds,
 That he feeds on the sweet, but poisonous thought,
 And dies. You call this *weakness* ! It is strength,
 I say,—the parent of all honest feeling.
 He who loves not his country, can love nothing.

Mar. Obey her, then : 't is she that puts thee forth.

Jac. Fos. Ay, there it is ; 't is like a mother's curse
 Upon my soul—the mark is set upon me.
 The exiles you speak of went forth by nations,
 Their hands upheld each other by the way,
 Their tents were pitch'd together—I'm alone.

Mar. You shall be so no more—I will go with thee.

Jac. Fos. My best Marina !—and our children ?

Mar.

They,

I fear, by the prevention of the state's
 Abhorrent policy (which holds all ties
 As threads, which may be broken at her pleasure),
 Will not be suffer'd to proceed with us.

Jac. Fos. And canst thou leave them ?

Mar.

Yes. With many a pang.

But I *can* leave them, children as they are,

To teach you to be less a child. From this
Learn you to sway your feelings, when exacted
By duties paramount; and 't is our first
On earth to bear.

Jac. Fos. Have I not borne?

Mar. Too much

From tyrannous injustice, and enough
To teach you not to shrink now from a lot,
Which, as compared with what you've undergone
Of late, is mercy.

Jac. Fos. Ah! you never yet
Were far away from Venice, never saw
Her beautiful towers in the receding distance,
While every furrow of the vessel's track
Seem'd ploughing deep into your heart; you never
Saw day go down upon your native spires
So calmly with its gold and crimson glory,
And after dreaming a disturbed vision
Of them and theirs, awoke and found them not.

Mar. I will divide this with you. Let us think
Of our departure from this much-loved city
(Since you must *love* it, as it seems), and this
Chamber of state, her gratitude allots you.
Our children will be cared for by the Doge,
And by my uncles: we must sail ere night.

Jac. Fos. That's sudden. Shall I not behold my
father?

Mar. You will.

Jac. Fos. Where?

Mar. Here, or in the ducal chamber—
He said not which. I would that you could bear
Your exile as he bears it.

Jac. Fos. Blame him not.
I sometimes murmur for a moment; but
He could not now act otherwise. A show
Of feeling or compassion on his part
Would have but drawn upon his aged head
Suspicion from "the Ten," and upon mine
Accumulated ills.

Mar. Accumulated!
What pangs are those they have spared you?

Jac. Fos. That of leaving
Venice without beholding him or you,

Which might have been forbidden now, as 't was
Upon my former exile.

Mar. That is true,
And thus far I am also the state's debtor,
And shall be more so when I see us both
Floating on the free waves—away—away—
Be it to the earth's end, from this abhorr'd,
Unjust, and——

Jac. Fos. Curse it not. If I am silent,
Who dares accuse my country?

Mar. Men and angels!
The blood of myriads reeking up to heaven,
The groans of slaves in chains, and men in dungeons,
Mothers, and wives, and sons, and sires, and subjects,
Held in the bondage of ten bald-heads; and
Though last, not least, *thy silence!* *Couldst thou say*
Aught in its favour, who would praise like thee?

Jac. Fos. Let us address us then, since so it must be,
To our departure. Who comes here?

Enter LOREDANO, attended by Familiars.

Lor. (to the Familiars). Retire,
But leave the torch. [*Exeunt the two Familiars.*]

Jac. Fos. Most welcome, noble signor.
I did not deem this poor place could have drawn
Such presence hither.

Lor. 'T is not the first time
I have visited these places.

Mar. Nor would be
The last, were all men's merits well rewarded.
Came you here to insult us, or remain
As spy upon us, or as hostage for us?

Lor. Neither are of my office, noble lady!
I am sent hither to your husband, to
Announce "the Ten's" decree.

Mar. That tenderness
Has been anticipated: it is known.

Lor. As how?

Mar. I have inform'd him, not so gently,
Doubtless, as your nice feelings would prescribe,
The indulgence of your colleagues; but he knew it.
If you come for our thanks, take them, and hence!
The dungeon gloom is deep enough without you,

And full of reptiles, not less loathsome, though
Their sting is honester.

Jac. Fos. I pray you, calm you :
What can avail such words?

Mar. To let him know
That he is known.

Lor. Let the fair dame preserve
Her sex's privilege.

Mar. I have some sons, sir,
Will one day thank you better.

Lor. You do well
To nurse them wisely. Foscari—you know
Your sentence, then?

Jac. Fos. Return to Candia?

Lor. True—
For life.

Jac. Fos. Not long.

Lor. I said—for life.

Jac. Fos. And I
Repeat—not long.

Lor. A year's imprisonment
In Canea—afterwards the freedom of
The whole isle.

Jac. Fos. Both the same to me ; the after
Freedom as is the first imprisonment.
Is't true my wife accompanies me?

Lor. Yes,
If she so wills it.

Mar. Who obtain'd that justice?

Lor. One who wars not with women.

Mar. But oppresses
Men : howsoever let him have *my* thanks
For the only boon I would have ask'd or taken
From him or such as he is.

Lor. He receives them
As they are offer'd.

Mar. May they thrive with him
So much !—no more.

Jac. Fos. Is this, sir, your whole mission?
Because we have brief time for preparation,
And you perceive your presence doth disquiet
This lady, of a house noble as yours.

Mar. Nobler !

Lor. How nobler?

Mar. As more generous!

We say the "generous steed" to express the purity
Of his high blood. Thus much I've learnt, although
Venetian (who see few steeds save of bronze),
From those Venetians who have skimm'd the coasts
Of Egypt and her neighbour Araby:
And why not say as soon the "*generous man*?"
If race be aught, it is in qualities
More than in years; and mine, which is as old
As yours, is better in its product, nay—
Look not so stern—but get you back, and pore
Upon your genealogic tree's most green
Of leaves and most mature of fruits, and there
Blush to find ancestors, who would have blush'd
For such a son—thou cold inveterate hater!

Jac. Fos. Again, Marina!

Mar. Again! *still*, Marina.

See you not, he comes here to glut his hate
With a last look upon our misery?
Let him partake it!

Jac. Fos. That were difficult.

Mar. Nothing more easy. He partakes it now—
Ay, he may veil beneath a marble brow
And sneering lip the pang, but he partakes it.
A few brief words of truth shame the devil's servants
No less than master; I have probed his soul
A moment, as the eternal fire, ere long,
Will reach it always. See how he shinks from me!
With death, and chains, and exile in his hand,
To scatter o'er his kind as he thinks fit;
They are his weapons, not his armour, for
I have pierced him to the core of his cold heart.
I care not for his frowns! We can but die,
And he but live, for him the very worst
Of destinies: each day secures him more
His tempter's.

Jac. Fos. This is mere insanity.

Mar. It may be so; and *who* hath made us *mad*?

Lor. Let her go on; it irks not me.

Mar. That's false!

You came here to enjoy a heartless triumph
Of cold looks upon manifold griefs! You came

To be sued to in vain—to mark our tears,
 And hoard our groans—to gaze upon the wreck
 Which you have made a prince's son—my husband ;
 In short, to trample on the fallen—an office
 The hangman shrinks from, as all men from him !
 How have you sped ? We are wretched, signor, as
 Your plots could make, and vengeance could desire
 us,
 And how feel you ?

Lor. As rocks.

Mar. By thunder blasted :
 They feel not, but no less are shiver'd. Come,
 Foscari ; now let us go, and leave this felon,
 The sole fit habitant of such a cell,
 Which he has peopled often, but ne'er fitly
 Till ne himself shall brood in it alone.

Enter the DOGE.

Jac. Fos. My father !

Doge. (*embracing him*). Jacopo ! my son—my son !

Jac. Fos. My father still ! How long it is since I
 Have heard thee name my name—*our* name !

Doge. My boy !
 Couldst thou but know——

Jac. Fos. I rarely, sir, have murmur'd.

Doge. I feel too much thou hast not.

Mar. Doge, look there !
 [*She points to LOREDANO.*]

Doge. I see the man—what mean'st thou ?

Mar. Caution !

Lor. Being

The virtue which this noble lady most
 May practise, she doth well to recommend it.

Mar. Wretch ! 't is no virtue, but the policy
 Of those who tain must deal perforce with vice :
 As such I recommend it, as I would
 To one whose foot was on an adder's path.

Doge. Daughter, it is sup'criluous ; I have long
 Known Loredano.

Lor. You may know him better.

Mar. Yes : worse he could not.

Jac. Fos. Father, let not these
 Our parting hours be lost in listening to

Reproaches, which boot nothing. Is it—is it,
Indeed, our last of meetings?

Doge.

You behold

These white hairs!

Jac. Fos.

And I feel, besides, that mine
Will never be so white. Embrace me, father!
I loved you ever—never more than now.
Look to my children—to your last child's children:
Let them be all to you which he was once,
And never be to you what I am now.
May I not see *them* also?

Mar.

No—not *here*.

Jac. Fos. They might behold their parent anywhere.

Mar. I would that they beheld their father in
A place which would not mingle fear with love,
To freeze their young blood in its natural current.
They have fed well, slept soft, and knew not that
Their sire was a mere hunted outlaw. Well,
I know his fate may one day be their heritage;
But let it only be their *heritage*,
And not their present fee. Their senses, though
Alive to love, are yet awake to terror;
And these vile damps, too, and yon *thick green wave*
Which floats above the place where we now stand—
A cell so far below the water's level,
Sending its pestilence through every crevice,
Might strike them: *this is not their atmosphere*,
However you—and you—and most of all,
As worthiest—*you*, sir, noble Loredano!
May breathe it without prejudice.

Jac. Fos.

I have not

Reflected upon this, but acquiesce.
I shall depart, then, without meeting them?

Doge. Not so: they shall await you in my chamber.

Jac. Fos. And must I leave them—all?

Lor.

You must.

Jac. Fos.

Not one?

Lor. They are the state's.

Mar.

I thought they had been mine.

Lor. They are, in all material things.

Mar.

That is

In all things painful. If they're sick, they will
Be left to me to tend them: should they die,

To me to bury and to mourn ; but if
They live, they'll make you soldiers, senators,
Slaves, exiles--what *you* will ; or if they are
Females with portions, brides and *bribes* for nobles !
Behold the state's care for its sons and mothers !

Lor. The hour approaches, and the wind is fair.

Jac. Fos. How know you that here, where the genial wind
Ne'er blows in all its blustering freedom ?

Lor. 'T was so
When I came here. The galley floats within
A bow-shot of the " Riva di Schiavoni."

Jac. Fos. Father ! I pray you to precede me, and
Prepare my children to behold their father.

Doge. Be firm, my son !

Jac. Fos. I will do my endeavour.

Mar. Farewell ! at least to this detested dungeon,
And him to whose good offices you owe
In part your past imprisonment.

Lor. And present
Liberation.

Doge. He speaks truth.

Jac. Fos. No doubt ! but 't is
Exchange of chains for heavier chains I owe him.
He knows this, or he had not sought to change them.
But I reproach not.

Lor. The time narrows, signor.

Jac. Fos. Alas ! I little thought so lingeringly
To leave abodes like this : but when I feel
That every step I take, even from this cell,
Is one away from Venice, I look back
Even on these dull damp walls, and——

Doge. Boy ! no tears.

Mar. Let them flow on : he wept not on the rack
To shame him, and they cannot shame him now.
They will relieve his heart—that too kind heart—
And I will find an hour to wipe away
Those tears, or add my own. I could weep now,
But would not gratify yon wretch so far.
Let us proceed. *Doge*, lead the way.

Lor. (*to the Familiar*). The torch, there !

Mar. Yes, light on us, as to a funeral pyre,
With Loredano mourning like an heir.

Doge. My son, you are feeble ; take this hand.

Jac. Fos.

Alas !

Must youth support itself on age, and I
Who ought to be the prop of yours ?

Lor.

Take mine.

Mar. Touch it not, Foscari ; 't will sting you. Signor,
Stand off ! be sure, that if a grasp of yours
Would raise us from the gulf wherein we are plunged
No hand of ours would stretch itself to meet it.
Come, Foscari, take the hand the altar gave you ;
It could not save, but will support you ever. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*A Hall in the Ducal Palace.*

Enter LOREDANO and BARBARIGO.

Bar. And have you confidence in such a project ?

Lor. I have.

Bar. 'T is hard upon his years.

Lor.

Say rather

Kind to relieve him from the cares of state.

Bar. 'T will break his heart.

Lor.

Age has no heart to break.

He has seen his son's half-broken, and, except
A start of feeling in his dungeon, never
Swerved.

Bar. In his countenance, I grant you, never ;
But I have seen him sometimes in a calm
So desolate, that the most clamorous grief
Had nought to envy him within. Where is he ?

Lor. In his own portion of the palace, with
His son, and the whole race of Foscari.

Bar. Bidding farewell.

Lor.

A last. As soon he shall

Bid to his dukedom.

Bar.

When embarks the son ?

Lor. Forthwith—when this long leave is taken. 'T is
Time to admonish them again.

Bar.

Forbear ;

Retrench not from their moments.

Lor.

Not I, now

We have higher business for our own. This day

Shall be the last of the old Doge's reign,
As the first of his son's last banishment,
And that is vengeance.

Bar. In my mind, too deep.

Lor. 'T is moderate—not even life for life, the rule
Denounced of retribution from all time ;
They owe me still my father's and my uncle's.

Bar. Did not the Doge deny this strongly?

Lor. Doubtless.

Bar. And did not this shake your suspicion?

Lor. No.

Bar. But if this deposition should take place
By our united influence in the Council,
It must be done with all the deference
Due to his years, his station, and his deeds.

Lor. As much of ceremony as you will,
So that the thing be done. You may, for aught
I care, depute the Council on their knees
(Like Barbarossa to the Pope), to beg him
To have the courtesy to abdicate.

Bar. What if he will not?

Lor. We'll elect another,
And make him null.

Bar. But will the laws uphold us?

Lor. What laws?—"The Ten" are laws; and if they
I will be legislator in this business. [were not,

Bar. At your own peril?

Lor. There is none, I tell you,
Our powers are such.

Bar. But he has twice already
Solicited permission to retire,
And twice it was refused.

Lor. The better reason
To grant it the third time.

Bar. Unask'd?

Lor. It shows
The impression of his former instances :
If they were from his heart, he may be thankful :
If not, 't will punish his hypocrisy.
Come, they are met by this time ; let us join them,
And be *thou* fix'd in purpose for this once.
I have prepared such arguments as will not
Fail to move them, and to remove him : since

Their thoughts, their objects, have been sounded, do not
You, with your wonted scruples, teach us pause,
 And all will prosper.

Bar. Could I but be certain
 This is no prelude to such persecution
 Of the sire as has fallen upon the son,
 I would support you.

Lor. He is safe, I tell you;
 His fourscore years and five may linger on
 As long as he can drag them: 't is his throne
 Alone is aim'd at.

Bar. But discarded princes
 Are seldom long of life.

Lor. And men of eighty
 More seldom still.

Bar. And why not wait these few years?

Lor. Because we have waited long enough, and he
 Lived longer than enough. Hence! in to council!

[*Exeunt* LOREDANO and BARBARIGO.]

Enter MEMMO and a Senator.

Sen. A summons to "the Ten!" why so?

Mem. "The Ten"

Alone can answer; they are rarely wont
 To let their thoughts anticipate their purpose
 By previous proclamation. We are summon'd—
 That is enough.

Sen. For them, but not for us;
 I would know why.

Mem. You will know why anon,
 If you obey: and, if not, you no less
 Will know why you should have obey'd.

Sen. I mean not
 To oppose them, *but*——

Mem. In Venice "*but*" 's a traitor.
 But me no "*buts*," unless you would pass o'er
 The Bridge which few repass.

Sen. I am silent.

Mem. Why
 Thus hesitate? "The Ten" have call'd in aid
 Of their deliberation five and twenty
 Patricians of the senate—you are one,
 And I another; and it seems to me

Both honour'd by the choice or chance which leads us
To mingle with a body so august.

Sen. Most true. I say no more.

Mem. As we hope, signor,
And all may honestly, (that is, all those
Of noble blood may,) one day hope to be
Decemvir, it is surely for the senate's
Chosen delegates a school of wisdom, to
Be thus admitted, though as novices,
To view the mysteries.

Sen. Let us view them : they,
No doubt, are worth it.

Mem. Being worth our lives
If we divulge them, doubtless they are worth
Something, at least to you or me.

Sen. I sought not
A place within the sanctuary ; but being
Chosen, however reluctantly so chosen,
I shall fulfil my office.

Mem. Let us not
Be latest in obeying "the Ten's" summons.

Sen. All are not met, but I am of your thought
So far—let 's in.

Mem. The earliest are most welcome
In earnest councils—we will not be least so.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter the DOGE, JACOPO FOSCARI, and MARINA.

Jac. Fos. Ah, father ! though I must and will depart,
Yet—yet—I pray you to obtain for me
That I once more return unto my home,
Howe'er remote the period. Let there be
A point of time, as beacon to my heart,
With any penalty annex'd they please,
But let me still return.

Doge. Son Jacopo,
Go and obey our country's will : 't is not
For us to look beyond.

Jac. Fos. But still I must
Look back. I pray you think of me.

Doge. Alas !
You ever were my dearest offspring, when
They were more numerous, nor can be less so

Now you are last ; but did the state demand
 The exile of the disinterred ashes
 Of your three goodly brothers, now in earth,
 And their desponding shades come flitting round
 To impede the act, I must no less obey
 A duty, paramount to every duty.

Mar. My husband ! let us on : this but prolongs
 Our sorrow.

Jac. Fos. But we are not summon'd yet ;
 The galley's sails are not unfurl'd :—who knows ?
 The wind may change.

Mar. And if it do, it will not
 Change *their* hearts, or your lot : the galley's oars
 Will quickly clear the harbour.

Jac. Fos. O ye elements !
 Where are your storms ?

Mar. In human breasts. Alas !
 Will nothing calm you ?

Jac. Fos. Never yet did mariner
 Put up to patron saint such prayers for prosperous
 And pleasant breezes, as I call upon you,
 Ye tutelary saints of my own city ! which
 Ye love not with more holy love than I,
 To lash up from the deep the Adrian waves,
 And waken Auster, sovereign of the tempest !
 Till the sea dash me back on my own shore
 A broken corse upon the barren Lido,
 Where I may mingle with the sands which skirt
 The land I love, and never shall see more !

Mar. And wish you this with *me* beside you ?

Jac. Fos. No—
 No—not for thee, too good, too kind ! May'st thou
 Live long to be a mother to those children
 Thy fond fidelity for a time deprives
 Of such support ! But for myself alone,
 May all the winds of heaven howl down the Gulf,
 And tear the vessel, till the mariners,
 Appall'd, turn their despairing eyes on me,
 As the Phenicians did on Jonah, then
 Cast me out from amongst them, as an offering
 To appease the waves. The billow which destroys me
 Will be more merciful than man, and bear me
 Dead, but *still bear me to a native grave*

From fishers' hands, upon the desolate strand,
Which, of its thousand wrecks, hath ne'er received
One lacerated like the heart which then
Will be.—But wherefore breaks it not? why live I?

Mar. To man thyself, I trust, with time, to master
Such useless passion. Until now thou wert
A sufferer, but not a loud one: why,
What is this to the things thou hast borne in silence—
Imprisonment and actual torture?

Jac. Fos. Double,
Triple, and tenfold torture! But you are right,
It must be borne. Father, your blessing.

Doge. Would
It could avail thee! but no less thou hast it.

Jac. Fos. Forgive——

Doge. What?

Jac. Fos. My poor mother, for my birth,
And me for having lived, and you yourself
(As I forgive you), for the gift of life,
Which you bestow'd upon me as my sire.

Mar. What hast thou done?

Jac. Fos. Nothing. I cannot charge
My memory with much save sorrow: but
I have been so beyond the common lot
Chasten'd and visited, I needs must think
That I was wicked. If it be so, may
What I have undergone here keep me from
A like hereafter!

Mar. Fear not: *that's* reserved
For your oppressors.

Jac. Fos. Let me hope not.

Mar. Hope not?

Jac. Fos. I cannot wish them *as* they have inflicted.

Mar. *All!* the consummate fiends! A thousand-fold
May the worm which ne'er dieth feed upon them!

Jac. Fos. They may repent.

Mar. And if they do, Heaven will not
Accept the tardy penitence of demons.

Enter an Officer and Guards.

Offi. Signor! the boat is at the shore—the wind
Is rising—we are ready to attend you.

Jac. Fos. And I to be attended. Once more, father,
Your hand !

Doge. Take it. Alas ! how thine own trembles !

Jac. Fos. No—you mistake ; 't is yours that shakes,
my father.

Farewell !

Doge. Farewell ! Is there aught else ?

Jac. Fos.

No—nothing.

[*To the Officer.*]

Lend me your arm, good signor.

Offi. You turn pale—

Let me support you—paler—ho ! some aid there !
Some water !

Mar. Ah, he is dying.

Jac. Fos. Now, I'm ready—
My eyes swim strangely—where's the door ?

Mar. Away !

Let me support him—my best love ! Oh, God !

How faintly beats this heart—this pulse !

Jac. Fos.

The light !

Is it the light ?—I am faint.

[*Officer presents him with water.*]

Offi.

He will be better,

Perhaps, in the air.

Jac. Fos.

I doubt not. Father—wife—

Your hands !

Mar. There's death in that damp, clammy grasp.

Oh, God !—My Foscari, how fare you ?

Jac. Fos.

Well ! [*He dies.*]

Offi. He's gone !

Doge.

He's free.

Mar.

No—no, he is not dead :

There must be life yet in that heart—he could not

Thus leave me.

Doge.

Daughter !

Mar.

Hold thy peace, old man !

I am no daughter now—thou hast no son.

Oh, Foscari !

Offi.

We must remove the body.

Mar. Touch it not, dungeon miscreants ! your base office
Ends with his life, and goes not beyond murder,
Even by your murderous laws. Leave his remains
To those who know to honour them.

Off. I must
Inform the signory, and learn their pleasure.

Doge. Inform the signory from *me*, the Doge,
They have no further power upon those ashes :
While he lived he was theirs, as fits a subject—
Now he is *mine*—my broken-hearted boy ! [*Exit Officer.*]

Mar. And I must live !

Doge. Your children live, Marina.

Mar. My children ! true—they live, and I must live
To bring them up to serve the state, and die
As died their father. Oh ! what best of blessings
Were barrenness in Venice. Would my mother
Had been so !

Doge. My unhappy children !

Mar. What !
You feel it then at last—you !—Where is now
The stoic of the state ?

Doge (*throwing himself down by the body*). *Here !*

Mar. Ay, weep on !
I thought you had no tears—you hoarded them
Until they're useless ; but weep on ! he never
Shall weep more—never, never more.

Enter LOREDANO and BARBARIGO.

Lor. What's here ?

Mar. Ah ! the devil come to insult the dead ! Avaunt !
Incarnate Lucifer ! 't is holy ground.

A martyr's ashes now lie there, which make it
A shrine. Get thee back to thy place of torment !

Bar. Lady, we knew not of this sad event,
But pass'd here merely on our path from council.

Mar. Pass on.

Lor. We sought the Doge.

Mar. (*pointing to the Doge, who is still on the ground by
his son's body*). He's busy, look,

About the business *you* provided for him.
Are ye content ?

Bar. We will not interrupt
A parent's sorrows.

Mar. No, ye only make them,
Then leave them.

Doge (*rising*). Sirs, I am ready.

Bar. No—not now.

Lor. Yet 't was important.

Doge.

If 't was so, I can

Only repeat—I am ready.

Bar.

It shall not be

Just now, though Venice totter'd o'er the deep
Like a frail vessel. I respect your griefs.

Doge. I thank you. If the tidings which you bring
Are evil, you may say them ; nothing further
Can touch me more than him thou look'st on there ;
If they be good, say on ; you need not *fear*
That they can *comfort* me.

Bar.

I would they could !

Doge. I spoke not to *you*, but to Loredano.
He understands me.

Mar.

Ah ! I thought it would be so.

Doge. What mean you ?

Mar.

Lo ! there is the blood beginning
To flow through the dead lips of Foscari—
The body bleeds in presence of the assassin.

[*To LOREDANO.*

Thou cowardly murderer by law, behold
How death itself bears witness to thy deeds !

Doge. My child ! this is a phantasy of grief.
Bear hence the body.

[*To his attendants.*

Signors, if it please you,

Within an hour I'll hear you.

[*Exeunt DOGE, MARINA, and attendants with the body.*

Manent LOREDANO and BARBARIGO.

Bar.

He must not

Be troubled now.

Lor.

He said himself that nought
Could give him trouble further.

Bar.

These are words ;

But grief is lonely, and the breaking in
Upon it barbarous.

Lor.

Sorrow preys upon
Its solitude, and nothing more diverts it
From its sad visions of the other world,
Than calling it at moments back to this.
The busy have no time for tears.

Bar.

And therefore
You would deprive this old man of all business ?

Lor. The thing's decreed. The Giunta and "the Ten"

Have made it law—who shall oppose that law?

Bar. Humanity!

Lor. Because his son is dead?

Bar. And yet unburied.

Lor. Had we known this when
The act was passing, it might have suspended
Its passage, but impedes it not—once past.

Bar. I'll not consent.

Lor. You have consented to
All that's essential—leave the rest to me.

Bar. Why press his abdication now?

Lor. The feelings
Of private passion may not interrupt
The public benefit; and what the state
Decides to-day must not give way before
To-morrow for a natural accident.

Bar. You have a son.

Lor. I *have*—and *had* a father.

Bar. Still so inexorable?

Lor. Still.

Bar. But let him
Inter his son before we press upon him
This edict.

Lor. Let him call up into life
My sire and uncle—I consent. Men may,
Even aged men, be, or appear to be,
Sires of a hundred sons, but cannot kindle
An atom of their ancestors from earth.
The victims are not equal; he has seen
His sons expire by natural deaths, and I
My sires by violent and mysterious maladies.
I used no poison, bribed no subtle master
Of the destructive art of healing, to
Shorten the path to the eternal cure.
His sons—and he had four—are dead, without
My dabbling in vile drugs.

Bar. And art thou sure
He dealt in such?

Lor. Most sure.

Bar. And yet he seems
All openness.

Lor. And so he seem'd not long
Ago to Carmagnuola.

Bar. The attainted
And foreign traitor?

Lor. Even so : when *he*,
After the very night in which " the Ten "
(Join'd with the Doge) decided his destruction,
Met the great Duke at daybreak with a jest,
Demanding whether he should augur him
" The good day or good night ? " his Doge-ship answer'd,
" That he in truth had pass'd a night of vigil,
In which (he added with a gracious smile),
There often has been question about you. "
'T was true ; the question was the death resolved
Of Carmagnuola, eight months ere he died ;
And the old Doge, who knew him doom'd, smiled on him
With deadly cozenage, eight long months beforehand—
Eight months of such hypocrisy as is
Learnt but in eighty years. Brave Carmagnuola
Is dead ; so is young Foscari and his brethren—
I never *smiled* on *them*.

Bar. Was Carmagnuola
Your friend?

Lor. He was the safeguard of the city.
In early life its foe, but, in his manhood,
Its saviour first, then victim.

Bar. Ah ! that seems
The penalty of saving cities. He
Whom we now act against not only saved
Our own, but added others to our sway.

Lor. The Romans (and we ape them) gave a crown
To him who took a city ; and they gave
A crown to him who saved a citizen
In battle : the rewards are equal. Now,
If we should measure forth the cities taken
By the Doge Foscari, with citizens
Destroy'd by him, or *through* him, the account
Were fearfully against him, although narrow'd
To private havoc, such as between him
And my dead father.

Bar. Are you then thus fix'd?

Lor. Why, what should change me?

Bar. That which changes me :

But you, I know, are marble to retain
A feud. But when all is accomplish'd, when
The old man is deposed, his name degraded,
His sons all dead, his family depress'd,
And you and yours triumphant, shall you sleep?

Lor. More soundly.

Bar. That's an error, and you'll find it
Ere you sleep with your fathers.

Lor. They sleep not
In their accelerated graves, nor will
Till Foscari fills his. Each night I see them
Stalk frowning round my couch, and, pointing towards
The ducal palace, marshal me to vengeance.

Bar. Fancy's distemperature! There is no passion
More spectral or fantastical than Hate;
Not even its opposite, Love, so peoples air
With phantoms, as this madness of the heart.

Enter an Officer.

Lor. Where go you, sirrah?

Offi. By the ducal order
To forward the preparatory rites
For the late Foscari's interment.

Bar. Their
Vault has been often open'd of late years.

Lor. 'T will be full soon, and may be closed for ever.

Offi. May I pass on?

Lor. You may.

Bar. How bears the Doge
This last calamity?

Offi. With desperate firmness.
In presence of another he says little,
But I perceive his lips move now and then;
And once or twice I heard him, from the adjoining
Apartment, mutter forth the words—"My son!"
Scarce audibly. I must proceed. [*Exit Officer.*]

Bar. This stroke
Will move all Venice in his favour.

Lor. Right!
We must be speedy: let us call together
The delegates appointed to convey
The Council's resolution.

Bar. I protest
Against it at this moment.
Lor. As you please—
I'll take their voices on it ne'ertheless,
And see whose most may sway them, yours or mine.
[*Exeunt BARBARIGO and LOREDANO.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*The DOGE's Apartment.**The DOGE and Attendants.*

Att. My lord, the deputation is in waiting ;
But add, that if another hour would better
Accord with your will, they will make it theirs.

Doge. To me all hours are like. Let them approach.
[*Exit Attendant.*]

An Officer. Prince! I have done your bidding.

Doge. What command?

Offi. A melancholy one—to call the attendance
Of—

Doge. True—true—true; I crave your pardon. I
Begin to fail in apprehension, and
Wax very old—old almost as my years.
Till now I fought them off, but they begin
To overtake me.

*Enter the Deputation, consisting of six of the Signory and the
Chief of the Ten.*

Noble men, your pleasure!

Chief of the Ten. In the first place, the Council doth
With the Doge on his late and private grief. [condole]

Doge. No more—no more of that.

Chief of the Ten. Will not the Duke
Accept the homage of respect?

Doge. I do
Accept it as 't is given—proceed.

Chief of the Ten. "The Ten,"
With a selected Giunta from the senate
Of twenty-five of the best born patricians,
Having deliberated on the state

Of the republic, and the o'erwhelming cares
Which, at this moment, doubly must oppress
Your years, so long devoted to your country,
Have judged it fitting, with all reverence,
Now to solicit from your wisdom (which
Upon reflection must accord in this),
The resignation of the ducal ring,
Which you have worn so long and venerably :
And to prove that they're not ungrateful, nor
Cold to your years and services, they add
An appanage of twenty hundred golden
Ducats, to make retirement not less splendid
Than should become a sovereign's retreat.

Doge. Did I hear rightly?

Chief of the Ten. Need I say again?

Doge. No--Have you done?

Chief of the Ten. I have spoken. Twenty-four
Hours are accorded you to give an answer.

Doge. I shall not need so many seconds.

Chief of the Ten. We
Will now retire.

Doge. Stay! four and twenty hours
Will alter nothing which I have to say.

Chief of the Ten. Speak!

Doge. When I twice before reiterated
My wish to abdicate, it was refused me ;
And not alone refused, but ye exacted
An oath from me that I would never more
Renew this instance. I have sworn to die
In full exertion of the functions which
My country call'd me here to exercise,
According to my honour and my conscience—
I cannot break *my* oath.

Chief of the Ten. Reduce us not
To the alternative of a decree,
Instead of your compliance.

Doge. Providence
Prolongs my days to prove and chasten me ;
But ye have no right to reproach my length
Of days, since every hour has been the country's.
I am ready to lay down my life for her,
As I have laid down dearer things than life :
But for my dignity—I hold it of

The *whole* republic : when the *general* will
Is manifest, then you shall all be answer'd.

Chief of the Ten. We grieve for such an answer ; but
it cannot

Avail you aught.

Doge. I can submit to all things,
But nothing will advance ; no, not a moment.
What you decree—decree.

Chief of the Ten. With this, then, must we
Return to those who sent us ?

Doge. You have heard me.

Chief of the Ten. With all due reverence we retire.
[*Exeunt the Deputation, &c.*]

Enter an Attendant.

Att. My lord,
The noble dame Marina craves an audience.
Doge. My time is hers.

Enter MARINA.

Mar. My lord, if I intrude—
Perhaps you fain would be alone ?

Doge. Alone !
Alone, come all the world around me, I
Am now and evermore. But we will bear it.

Mar. We will, and for the sake of those who are,
Endeavour——Oh, my husband !

Doge. Give it way :
I cannot comfort thee.

Mar. He might have lived,
So form'd for gentle privacy of life,
So loving, so beloved ; the native of
Another land, and who so blest and blessing
As my poor Foscari ? Nothing was wanting
Unto his happiness and mine save not
To be Venetian.

Doge. Or a prince's son.

Mar. Yes ; all things which conduce to other men's
Imperfect happiness or high ambition,
By some strange destiny, to him proved deadly.
The country and the people whom he loved,
The prince of whom he was the elder born,
And——

Doge. Soon may be a prince no longer.

Mar. How?

Doge. They have taken my son from me, and now aim
At my too long-worn diadem and ring.
Let them resume the gewgaws!

Mar. Oh, the tyrants!

In such an hour too!

Doge. 'Tis the fittest time;
An hour ago I should have felt it.

Mar. And
Will you not now resent it?—Oh, for vengeance!
But he, who, had he been enough protected,
Might have repaid protection in this moment,
Cannot assist his father.

Doge. Nor should do so
Against his country, had he a thousand lives
Instead of that——

Mar. They tortured from him. This
May be pure patriotism. I am a woman:
To me my husband and my children were
Country and home. I loved *him*—how I loved him!
I've seen him pass through such an ordeal as
The old martyrs would have shrunk from: he is gone,
And I, who would have given my blood for him,
Have nought to give but tears! But could I compass
The retribution of his wrongs!—Well, well!
I have sons, who shall be men.

Doge. Your grief distracts you.

Mar. I thought I could have borne it, when I saw him
Bow'd down by such oppression; yes. I thought
That I would rather look upon his corse
Than his prolong'd captivity:—I am punish'd
For that thought now. Would I were in his grave!

Doge. I must look on him once more.

Mar. Come with me!

Doge. Is he——

Mar. Our bridal bed is now his bier.

Doge. And he is in his shroud!

Mar. Come, come, old man!

[*Exit the DOGE and MARINA.*]

Enter BARBARIGO and LOREDANO.

Bar. (to an Attendant). Where is the Doge?

Att. This instant retired hence,
With the illustrious lady his son's widow.

Lor. Where?

Att. To the chamber where the body lies.

Bar. Let us return, then.

Lor. You forget, you cannot.
We have the implicit order of the Giunta
To await their coming here, and join them in
Their office: they'll be here soon after us.

Bar. And will they press their answer on the Doge?

Lor. 'T was his own wish that all should be done
promptly.

He answer'd quickly, and must so be answer'd;
His dignity is look'd to, his estate
Cared for—what would he more?

Bar. Die in his robes;
He could not have lived long; but I have done
My best to save his honours, and opposed
This proposition to the last, though vainly.
Why would the general vote compel me hither?

Lor. 'T was fit that some one of such different thoughts
From ours should be a witness, lest false tongues
Should whisper that a harsh majority
Dreaded to have its acts beheld by others.

Bar. And not less, I must needs think, for the sake
Of humbling me for my vain opposition.

You are ingenious, Loredano, in
Your modes of vengeance, nay, poetical,
A very Ovid in the art of *hating*;
'T is thus (although a secondary object,
Yet hate has microscopic eyes), to you
I owe by way of foil to the more zealous
This undesired association in
Your Giunta's duties.

Lor. How!—my Giunta!

Bar. *Yours!*

They speak your language, watch your nod, approve
Your plans, and do your work. Are they not *yours*?

Lor. You talk unwarily. 'T were best they hear not
This from you.

Bar. Oh! they'll hear as much one day
From louder tongues than mine; they've gone beyond
Even their exorbitance of power: and when

This happens in the most condemn'd and abject
States, stung humanity will rise to check it.

Lor. You talk but idly.

Bar. That remains for proof.

Here come our colleagues.

Enter the Deputation as before.

Chief of the Ten. Is the Duke aware

We seek his presence?

Att. He shall be inform'd.

[*Exit Attendant.*]

Bar. The Duke is with his son.

Chief of the Ten. If it be so,

We will remit him till the rites are over.

Let us return. 'T is time enough to-morrow.

Lor. (aside to Bar.) Now the rich man's hell-fire upon
your tongue,

Unquench'd, unquenchable! I'll have it torn

From its vile babbling roots, till you shall utter

Nothing but sobs through blood, for this! Sage signors,

I pray ye be not hasty. [*Aloud to the others.*]

Bar. But be human!

Lor. See, the Duke comes!

Enter the DOGE.

Doge. I have obey'd your summons.

Chief of the Ten. We come once more to urge our past
request.

Doge. And I to answer.

Chief of the Ten. What?

Doge. My only answer.

You have heard it.

Chief of the Ten. Hear *you* then the last decree,
Definite and absolute!

Doge. To the point—

To the point! I know of old the forms of office,
And gentle preludes to strong acts.—Go on!

Chief of the Ten. You are no longer Doge; you are
released

From your imperial oath as sovereign;

Your ducal robes must be put off; but for

Your services, the state allots the appanage

Already mention'd in our former congress.

Three days are left you to remove from hence,
Under the penalty to see confiscated
All your own private fortune.

Doge. That last clause,
I am proud to say, would not enrich the treasury.

Chief of the Ten. Your answer, Duke!

Lor. Your answer, Francis Foscari!

Doge. If I could have foreseen that my old age
Was prejudicial to the state, the chief
Of the republic never would have shown
Himself so far ungrateful, as to place
His own high dignity before his country;
But this *life* having been so many years
Not useless to that country, I would fain
Have consecrated my last moments to her,
But the decree being render'd, I obey.

Chief of the Ten. If you would have the three days
named extended,
We willingly will lengthen them to eight,
As sign of our esteem.

Doge. Not eight hours, signor,
Nor even eight minutes—there 's the ducal ring,
[*Taking off his ring and cap.*]
And there the ducal diadem. And so
The Adriatic 's free to wear another.

Chief of the Ten. Yet go not forth so quickly.

Doge. I am old, sir,
And even to move but slowly must begin
To move betimes. Methinks I see amongst you
A face I know not.—Senator! your name,
You, by your garb, Chief of the Forty!

Mem. Signor,
I am the son of Marco Memmo.

Doge. Ah!
Your father was my friend.—But *sons* and *fathers*!—
What, ho! my servants there!

Atten. My prince!

Doge. No prince—
There are the princes of the prince! [*Pointing to the*
Ten's Deputation.—Prepare
To part from hence upon the instant.

Chief of the Ten. Why
So rashly? 't will give scandal.

Doge.

Answer that ;

It is your province.—Sirs, bestir yourselves :

[*To the Ten.*[*To the Servants.*

There is one but then which I beg you bear
 With care, although 't is past all further harm—
 But I will look to that myself.

Bar.

He means

The body of his son.

Doge.

And call Marina,

My daughter !

*Enter MARINA.**Doge.*

Get thee ready, we must mourn

Elsewhere.

Mar.

And everywhere.

Doge.

True ; but in freedom,

Without these jealous spies upon the great.

Signors, you may depart : what would you more ?

We are going : do you fear that we shall bear

The palace with us ? Its *old* walls, ten timesAs *old* as I am, and I'm very old,

Have served you, so have I, and I and they

Could tell a tale ; but I invoke them not

To fall upon you ! else they would, as erst

The pillars of stone Dagon's temple on

The Israelite and his Philistine foes.

Such power I do believe there might exist

In such a curse as mine, provoked by such

As you ; but I curse not. Adieu, good signors !

May the next duke be better than the present !

Lor. The *present* duke is Paschal Malipiero.*Doge.* Not till I pass the threshold of these doors.

Lor. Saint Mark's great bell is soon about to toll
 For his inauguration.

Doge.

Earth and heaven !

Ye will reverberate this peal ; and I

Live to hear this !—the first Doge who e'er heard

Such sound for his successor : happier he,

My attainted predecessor, stern Faliero—

This insult at the least was spared him.

Lor.

What !

Do you regret a traitor ?

Doge. No—I merely
 Envy the dead.

Chief of the Ten. My lord, if you indeed
 Are bent upon this rash abandonment
 Of the state's palace, at the least retire
 By the private staircase, which conducts you towards
 The landing-place of the canal.

Doge. No. I
 Will now descend the stairs by which I mounted
 To sovereignty—the Giants' Stairs, on whose
 Broad eminence I was invested duke.
 My services have call'd me up those steps,
 The malice of my foes will drive me down them.
There five and thirty years ago was I
 Install'd, and traversed these same halls, from which
 I never thought to be divorced except
 A corse—a corse, it might be, fighting for them—
 But not push'd hence by fellow-citizens.
 But come ; my son and I will go together—
 He to his grave, and I to pray for mine.

Chief of the Ten. What ! thus in public ?

Doge. I was publicly
 Elected, and so will I be deposed.
 Marina ! art thou willing ?

Mar. Here's my arm !

Doge. And here my staff : thus propp'd will I go forth.

Chief of the Ten. It must not be—the people will
 perceive it.

Doge. The people !—there's no people, you well know it,
 Else you dare not deal thus by them or me.
 There is a *populace*, perhaps, whose looks
 May shame you ; but they dare not groan nor curse you,
 Save with their hearts and eyes.

Chief of the Ten. You speak in passion,
 Else——

Doge. You have reason. I have spoken much
 More than my wont : it is a foible which
 Was not of mine, but more excuses you,
 Inasmuch as it shows that I approach
 A dotage which may justify this deed
 Of yours, although the law does not, nor will.
 Farewell, sirs !

Bar. You shall not depart without

An escort fitting past and present rank.
 We will accompany, with due respect,
 The Doge unto his private palace. Say!
 My brethren, will we not?

Different voices.

Ay!—ay!

You shall not

Doge.
 Stir—in my train, at least. I enter'd here
 As sovereign—I go out as citizen
 By the same portals, but as citizen.
 All these vain ceremonies are base insults,
 Which only ulcerate the heart the more,
 Applying poisons there as antidotes.
 Pomp is for princes—I am *none*!—That's false,
 I am, but only to these gates.—Ah!

Lor.

Hark!

[*The great bell of Saint Mark's tolls.*]

Bar. The bell!

Chief of the Ten. Saint Mark's, which tolls for the
 election

Of Malipiero.

Doge.

Well I recognise

The sound! I heard it once, but once before,
 And that is five and thirty years ago;
 Even *then* I was not young.

Bar.

Sit down, my lord!

You tremble.

Doge.

'Tis the knell of my poor boy!
 My heart aches bitterly.

Bar.

I pray you sit.

Doge. No; my seat here has been a throne till now.
 Marina! let us go.

Mar.

Most readily.

Doge (*walks a few steps, then stops*). I feel athirst—will
 no one bring me here

A cup of water?

Bar.

I——

Mar.

And I——

Lor.

And I——

[*The Doge takes a goblet from the hand of LOREDANO.*]

Doge. I take *yours*, Loredano, from the hand
 Most fit for such an hour as this.

Lor.

Why so?

Doge. 'Tis said that our Venetian crystal has

Such pure antipathy to poisons as
To burst, if aught of venom touches it.
You bore this goblet, and it is not broken.

Lor. Well, sir!

Doge. Then it is false, or you are true.
For my own part, I credit neither; 't is
An idle legend.

Mar. You talk wildly, and
Had better now be seated, nor as yet
Depart. Ah! now you look as look'd my husband!

Bar. He sinks!—support him!—quick—a chair—sup-
port him!

Doge. The bell tolls on!—let's hence—my brain's on
fire!

Bar. I do beseech you, lean upon us!

Doge. No!
A sovereign should die standing. My poor boy!—
Off with your arms!—*That bell!*

[*The DOGE drops down and dies.*]

Mar. My God! My God!

Bar. (to Lor.). Behold! your work's completed!

Chief of the Ten. Is there then
No aid? Call in assistance!

Att. 'T is all over.

Chief of the Ten. If it be so, at least his obsequies
Shall be such as befits his name and nation,
His rank and his devotion to the duties
Of the realm, while his age permitted him
To do himself and them full justice. Brethren,
Say, shall it not be so?

Bar. He has not had
The misery to die a subject where
He reign'd: then let his funeral rites be princely.

Chief of the Ten. We are agreed, then?

All, except Lor., answer, Yes.

Chief of the Ten. Heaven's peace be with him!

Mar. Signors, your pardon: this is mockery.
Juggle no more with that poor remnant, which
A moment since, while yet it had a soul,
(A soul by whom you have increased your empire,
And made your power as proud as was his glory,)
You banish'd from his palace, and tore down
From his high place, with such relentless coldness;

And now, when he can neither know these honours,
Nor would accept them if he could, you, signors,
Purpose, with idle and superfluous pomp,
To make a pageant over what you trampled.
A princely funeral will be your reproach,
And not his honour.

Chief of the Ten. Lady, we revoke not
Our purposes so readily.

Mar. I know it,
As far as touches torturing the living.
I thought the dead had been beyond even *you*,
Though (some, no doubt) consign'd to powers which may
Resemble that you exercise on earth.
Leave him to me; you would have done so for
His dregs of life, which you have kindly shorten'd:
It is my last of duties, and may prove
A dreary comfort in my desolation.
Grief is fantastical, and loves the dead,
And the apparel of the grave.

Chief of the Ten. Do you
Pretend still to this office?

Mar. I do, signor.
Though his possessions have been all consumed
In the state's service, I have still my dowry,
Which shall be consecrated to his rites,
And those of—— [*She stops with agitation.*]

Chief of the Ten. Best retain it for your children.

Mar. Ay, they are fatherless, I thank you.

Chief of the Ten. We
Cannot comply with your request. His relics
Shall be exposed with wonted pomp, and follow'd
Unto their home by the new Doge, not clad
As *Doge*, but simply as a senator.

Mar. I've heard of murderers who have interr'd
Their victims; but ne'er heard, until this hour,
Of so much splendour in hypocrisy
O'er those they slew. I've heard of widows' tears—
Alas! I've shed some—always thanks to you!
I've heard of *heirs* in sables—you have left none
To the deceased, so you would act the part
Of such. Well, sirs, your will be done! as one day,
I trust, Heaven's will be done too!

Chief of the Ten. Know you, lady,

To whom ye speak, and perils of such speech?

Mar. I know the former better than yourselves;
The latter—like yourselves; and can face both.
Wish you more funerals?

Bar. Heed not her rash words;
Her circumstances must excuse her bearing.

Chief of the Ten. We will not note them down.

Bar. (*turning to Lor., who is writing upon his tablets*).

What art thou writing.

With such an earnest brow, upon thy tablets?

Lor. (*pointing to the Doge's body*). That he has paid me!

Chief of the Ten. What debt did he owe you?

Lor. A long and just one; Nature's debt and mine.

[*Curtain falls.*]

CAIN:

A MYSTERY.

Now the Serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the
LORD God had made.—*Gen. iii. 1.*

17

SIR WALTER SCOTT, BART.,

THIS MYSTERY OF CAIN IS INSCRIBED,

BY HIS OBLIGED FRIEND AND FAITHFUL SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

THE following scenes are entitled "A Mystery," in conformity with the ancient title annexed to dramas upon similar subjects, which were styled "Mysteries, or Moralities." The author has by no means taken the same liberties with his subject which were common formerly, as may be seen by any reader curious enough to refer to those very profane productions, whether in English, French, Italian, or Spanish. The author has endeavoured to preserve the language adapted to his

characters ; and where it is (and this is but rarely) taken from actual *Scripture*, he has made as little alteration, even of words, as the rhythm would permit. The reader will recollect that the book of Genesis does not state that Eve was tempted by a demon, but by "the Serpent;" and that only because he was "the most subtil of all the beasts of the field." Whatever interpretation the Rabbins and the Fathers may have put upon this, I take the words as I find them, and reply, with Bishop Watson upon similar occasions, when the Fathers were quoted to him, as Moderator in the schools of Cambridge, "Behold the Book!"—holding up the Scripture. It is to be recollected, that my present subject has nothing to do with the *New Testament*, to which no reference can be here made without anachronism. With the poems upon similar topics I have not been recently familiar. Since I was twenty I have never read Milton ; but I had read him so frequently before, that this may make little difference. Gesner's "Death of Abel" I have never read since I was eight years of age, at Aberdeen. The general impression of my recollection is delight ; but of the contents I remember only that Cain's wife was called Mahala, and Abel's Thirza ; in the following pages I have called them "Adah" and "Zillah," the earliest female names which occur in Genesis ; they were those of Lamech's wives : those of Cain and Abel are not called by their names. Whether, then, a coincidence of subject may have caused the same in expression, I know nothing, and care as little.

The reader will please to bear in mind (what few choose to recollect), that there is no allusion to a future state in any of the books of Moses, nor indeed in the Old Testament. For a reason for this extraordinary omission he may consult Warburton's "Divine Legation;" whether satisfactory or not, no better has yet been assigned. I have therefore supposed it new to Cain, without, I hope, any perversion of Holy Writ.

With regard to the language of Lucifer, it was difficult for me to make him talk like a clergyman upon the same subjects ; but I have done what I could to restrain him within the bounds of spiritual politeness. If he disclaims having tempted Eve in the shape of the Serpent, it is only because the book of Genesis has not the most distant allusion to anything of the kind, but merely to the Serpent in his serpentine capacity.

Note.—The reader will perceive that the author has partly adopted in this poem the notion of Cuvier, that the world had

been destroyed several times before the creation of man. This speculation, derived from the different strata and the bones of enormous and unknown animals found in them, is not contrary to the Mosaic account, but rather confirms it; as no human bones have yet been discovered in those strata, although those of many known animals are found near the remains of the unknown. The assertion of Lucifer, that the pre-Adamite world was also peopled by rational beings much more intelligent than man, and proportionably powerful to the mammoth, &c., &c., is, of course, a poetical fiction to help him to make out his case.

I ought to add, that there is a "tramelogedia" of Alfieri, called "Abele." I have never read that, nor any other of the posthumous works of the writer, except his Life.

RAVENNA, Sept. 20, 1821.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

ADAM. CAIN. ABEL.	MEN.	LUCIFER.	WOMEN.
ANGEL OF THE LORD.	SPIRITS	EVE. ADAH. ZILLAH.	

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*The Land without Paradise.—Time, Sunrise.*

ADAM, EVE, CAIN, ABEL, ADAH, ZILLAH, *offering a Sacrifice.*

Adam. GOD, the Eternal! Infinite! All-wise!—
Who out of darkness on the deep didst make
Light on the waters with a word—all hail!
Jehovah, with returning light, all hail!

Eve. God! who didst name the day, and separate
Morning from night, till then divided never—
Who didst divide the wave from wave, and call
Part of thy work the firmament—all hail!

Abel. God! who didst call the elements into
Earth, ocean, air, and fire, and with the day
And night, and worlds which these illuminate,

Or shadow, madest beings to enjoy them,
And love both them and thee—all hail ! all hail !

Adah. God, the Eternal ! Parent of all things !
Who didst create these best and beauteous beings,
To be beloved, more than all, save thee—
Let me love thee and them :—All hail ! all hail !

Zillah. Oh, God ! who loving, making, blessing all,
Yet didst permit the serpent to creep in,
And drive my father forth from Paradise,
Keep us from further evil :—Hail ! all hail !

Adam. Son Cain, my first-born, wherefore art thou
silent ?

Cain. Why should I speak ?

Adam. To pray.

Cain. Have ye not pray'd ?

Adam. We have, most fervently.

Cain. And loudly : I

Have heard you.

Adam. So will God, I trust.

Abel. Amen !

Adam. But, thou, my eldest born, art silent still.

Cain. 'T is better I should be so.

Adam. Wherefore so ?

Cain. I have nought to ask.

Adam. Nor aught to thank for ?

Cain. No.

Adam. Dost thou not live ?

Cain. Must I not die ?

Eve. Alas !

The fruit of our forbidden tree begins
To fall.

Adam. And we must gather it again.

Oh, God ! why didst thou plant the tree of knowledge ?

Cain. And wherefore pluck'd ye not the tree of life ?
Ye might have then defied him.

Adam. Oh ! my son,

Blaspheme not : these are serpent's words.

Cain. Why not ?

The snake spoke *truth* ; it *was* the tree of knowledge ;
It *was* the tree of life ; knowledge is good,
And life is good ; and how can both be evil ?

Eve. My boy ! thou speakest as I spoke, in sin,
Before thy birth : let me not see renew'd

My misery in thine. I have repented.
 Let me not see my offspring fall into
 The snares beyond the walls of Paradise,
 Which e'en in Paradise destroy'd his parents.
 Content thee with what *is*. Had we been so,
 Thou now hadst been contented.—Oh, my son!

Adam. Our orisons completed, let us hence.
 Each to his task of toil—not heavy, though
 Needful: the earth is young, and yields us kindly
 Her fruits with little labour.

Eve. Cain, my son,
 Behold thy father cheerful and resign'd,
 And do as he doth.

[*Exeunt ADAM and EVE.*]

Zillah. Wilt thou not, my brother?

Abel. Why wilt thou wear this gloom upon thy brow,
 Which can avail thee nothing, save to rouse
 The Eternal anger!

Adah. My beloved Cain,
 Wilt thou frown even on me?

Cain. No, Adah! no;
 I fain would be alone a little while.
 Abel, I'm sick at heart; but it will pass;
 Precede me, brother—I will follow shortly,
 And you, too, sisters, tarry not behind:
 Your gentleness must not be harshly met;
 I'll follow you anon.

Adah. If not, I will
 Return to seek you here.

Abel. The peace of God
 Be on your spirit, brother!

[*Exeunt ABEL, ZILLAH, and ADAH.*]

Cain (solus). And this is
 Life!—Toil! and wherefore should I toil? because
 My father could not keep his place in Eden.
 What had I done in this?—I was unborn:
 I sought not to be born; nor love the state
 To which that birth has brought me. Why did he
 Yield to the serpent and the woman? or,
 Yielding, why suffer? What was there in this?
 The tree was planted, and why not for him?
 If not, why place him near it, where it grew,
 The fairest in the centre? They have but

One answer to all questions, "'T was *his* will,
And *he* is good." How know I that? Because
He is all-powerful, must all-good, too, follow?
I judge but by the fruits—and they are bitter—
Which I must feed on for a fault not mine.
Whom have we here?—A shape like to the angels,
Yet of a sterner and a sadder aspect
Of spiritual essence: why do I quake?
Why should I fear him more than other spirits,
Whom I see daily wave their fiery swords
Before the gates round which I linger oft,
In twilight's hour, to catch a glimpse of those
Gardens which are my just inheritance,
Ere the night closes o'er the inhibited walls
And the immortal trees which overtop
The cherubim-defended battlements?
If I shrink not from these, the fire-arm'd angels,
Why should I quail from him who now approaches?
Yet he seems mightier far than them, nor less
Beauteous, and yet not all as beautiful
As he hath been, and might be: sorrow seems
Half of his immortality. And is it
So? and can aught grieve save humanity?
He cometh.

Enter LUCIFER.

Lucifer. Mortal!

Cain. Spirit, who art thou?

Lucifer. Master of Spirits.

Cain. And being so, canst thou
Leave them, and walk with dust?

Lucifer. I know the thoughts
Of dust, and feel for it, and for you.

Cain. How!
You know my thoughts?

Lucifer. They are the thoughts of all
Worthy of thought;—'t is your immortal part
Which speaks within you.

Cain. What immortal part?
This has not been reveal'd: the tree of life
Was withheld from us by my father's folly,
While that of knowledge, by my mother's haste,
Was pluck'd too soon; and all the fruit is death!

Lucifer. They have deceived thee ; thou shalt live.

Cain. I live,

But live to die ; and, living, see no thing
To make death hateful, save an innate clinging,
A loathsome, and yet all invincible,
Instinct of life, which I abhor, as I
Despise myself, yet cannot overcome—
And so I live. Would I had never lived !

Lucifer. Thou livest, and must live for ever : think not
The earth, which is thine outward cov'ring, is
Existence—it will cease, and thou wilt be
No less than thou art now.

Cain. No less ! and why
No more ?

Lucifer. It may be thou shalt be as we.

Cain. And ye ?

Lucifer. Are everlasting.

Cain. Are ye happy ?

Lucifer. We are mighty.

Cain. Are ye happy ?

Lucifer. No : art thou ?

Cain. How should I be so ? Look on me !

Lucifer. Poor clay !

And thou pretendest to be wretched ! Thou !

Cain. I am :—and thou, with all thy might, what art
thou ?

Lucifer. One who aspired to be what made thee, and
Would not have made thee what thou art.

Cain. Ah !

Thou look'st almost a god ; and ——

Lucifer. I am none :

And having fail'd to be one, would be nought
Save what I am. He conquer'd, let him reign !

Cain. Who ?

Lucifer. Thy sire's Maker, and the earth's.

Cain. And heaven's.

And all that in them is. So I have heard
His seraphs sing ; and so my father saith.

Lucifer. They say-- what they must sing and say, on
pain

Of being that which I am--and thou art--
Of spirits and of men.

Cain. And what is that ?

Lucifer. Souls who dare use their immortality—
Souls who dare to look the Omnipotent tyrant in
His everlasting face, and tell him that
His evil is not good! If he has made,
As he saith—which I know not, nor believe—
But, if he made us—he cannot unmake :
We are immortal!—nay, he 'd *have* us so,
'That he may torture :—let him! He is great—
But, in his greatness, is no happier than
We in our conflict: Goodness would not make
Evil; and what else hath he made? But let him
Sit on his vast and solitary throne,
Creating worlds, to make eternity
Less burthensome to his immense existence
And unparticipated solitude ;
Let him crowd orb on orb: he is alone
Indefinite, indissoluble tyrant ;
Could he but crush himself, 't were the best boon
He ever granted: but let him reign on,
And multiply himself in misery!
Spirits and Men, at least we sympathise—
And, suffering in concert, make our pangs
Innumerable more endurable,
By the unbounded sympathy of all
With all! But *He!* so wretched in his height,
So restless in his wretchedness, must still
Create, and re-create——

Cain. Thou speak'st to me of things which long have
swum
In visions through my thought: I never could
Reconcile what I saw with what I heard.
My father and my mother talk to me
Of serpents, and of fruits and trees: I see
The gates of what they call their Paradise
Guarded by fiery-sworded cherubim,
Which shut them out and me: I feel the weight
Of daily toil, and constant thought: I look
Around a world where I seem nothing, with
Thoughts which arise within me, as if they
Could master all things—but I thought alone
This misery was *mine*. My father is
Tamed down; my mother has forgot the mind
Which made her thirst for knowledge at the risk

Of an eternal curse ; my brother is
 A watching shepherd boy, who offers up
 The firstlings of the flock to him who bids
 The earth yield nothing to us without sweat ;
 My sister Zillah sings an earlier hymn
 Than the birds' matins ; and my Adah, my
 Own and beloved, she, too, understands not
 The mind which overwhelms me : never till
 Now met I aught to sympathise with me.
 'Tis well—I rather would consort with spirits.

Lucifer. And hadst thou not been fit by thine own soul
 For such companionship, I would not now
 Have stood before thee as I am : a serpent
 Had been enough to charm ye, as before.

Cain. Ah ! didst *thou* tempt my mother ?

Lucifer. I tempt none,

Save with the truth : was not the tree the tree
 Of knowledge ? and was not the tree of life
 Still fruitful ? Did *I* bid her pluck them not ?
 Did *I* plant things prohibited within
 The reach of beings innocent, and curious
 By their own innocence ? I would have made ye
 Gods ; and even He who thrust ye forth, so thrust ye
 Because " ye should not eat the fruits of life,
 And become gods as we." Were those his words ?

Cain. They were, as I have heard from those who
 heard them,

In thunder.

Lucifer. Then who was the demon ? He
 Who would not let ye live, or he who would
 Have made ye live for ever in the joy
 And power of knowledge ?

Cain. Would they had snatch'd both
 The fruits, or neither !

Lucifer. One is yours already,
 The other may be still.

Cain. How so ?

Lucifer. By being
 Yourselves, in your resistance. Nothing can
 Quench the mind, if the mind will be itself
 And centre of surrounding things—'t is made
 To sway.

Cain. But didst thou tempt my parents ?

Lucifer.

I?

Poor clay! what should I tempt them for, or how?

Cain. They say the serpent was a spirit.*Lucifer.*

Who

saith that? It is not written so on high:

The proud One will not so far falsify,

Though man's vast fears and little vanity

Would make him cast upon the spiritual nature

His own low failing. The snake *was* the snake—

No more; and yet not less than those he tempted,

In nature being earth also—*more* in wisdom,

Since he could overcome them, and foreknew

The knowledge fatal to their narrow joys.

Think'st thou I'd take the shape of things that die

Cain. But the thing had a demon?*Lucifer.*

He but woke one

In those he spake to with his forked tongue.

I tell thee that the serpent was no more

Than a mere serpent: ask the cherubim

Who guard the tempting tree. When thousand ages

Have roll'd o'er your dead ashes, and your seed's,

The seed of the then world may thus array

Their earliest fault in fable, and attribute

To me a shape I scorn, as I scorn all

That bows to him, who made things but to bend

Before his sullen, sole eternity;

But *we*, who see the truth, must speak it. Thy

Fond parents listen'd to a creeping thing,

And fell. For what should spirits tempt them? What

Was there to envy in the narrow bounds

Of Paradise, that spirits who pervade

Space—but I speak to thee of what thou know'st not,

With all thy tree of knowledge.

Cain.

But thou canst not

Speak aught of knowledge which I would not know,

And do not thirst to know, and bear a mind

To know.

Lucifer. And heart to look on?*Cain.*

Be it proved.

Lucifer. Darest thou look on Death?*Cain.*

He has not yet:

Been seen.

Lucifer. But must be undergone.

Cain. My father
Says he is something dreadful, and my mother
Weeps when he's named; and Abel lifts his eyes
To heaven, and Zillah casts hers to the earth,
And sighs a prayer; and Adah looks on me,
And speaks not.

Lucifer. And thou?

Cain. Thoughts unspeakable
Crowd in my breast to burning, when I hear
Of this almighty Death, who is, it seems,
Inevitable. Could I wrestle with him?
I wrestled with the lion, when a boy,
In play, till he ran roaring from my gripe.

Lucifer. It has no shape; but will absorb all things
That bear the form of earth-born being.

Cain. Ah!
I thought it was a being: who could do
Such evil things to beings save a being?

Lucifer. Ask the Destroyer.

Cain. Who?

Lucifer. The Maker—call him
Which name thou wilt; he makes but to destroy.

Cain. I knew not that, yet thought it, since I heard
Of death: although I know not what it is,
Yet it seems horrible. I have look'd out
In the vast desolate night in search of him;
And when I saw gigantic shadows in
The umbrage of the walls of Eden, chequer'd
By the far-flashing of the cherubs' swords,
I watch'd for what I thought his coming: for
With fear rose longing in my heart to know
What 't was which shook us all—but nothing came.
And then I turn'd my weary eyes from off
Our native and forbidden Paradise,
Up to the lights above us, in the azure,
Which are so beautiful: shall they, too, die?

Lucifer. Perhaps—but long outlive both thine and thee.

Cain. I'm glad of that: I would not have them die—
They are so lovely. What is death? I fear,
I feel, it is a dreadful thing; but what,
I cannot compass: 't is denounced against us,
Both them who sinn'd and sinn'd not, as an ill—
What ill?

Lucifer. To be resolved into the earth.

Cain. But shall I know it?

Lucifer. As I know not death,
I cannot answer.

Cain. Were I quiet earth,
'That were no evil: would I ne'er had been
Aught else but dust!

Lucifer. That is a grovelling wish,
Less than thy father's, for he wish'd to know.

Cain. But not to live, or wherefore pluck'd he not
The life-tree?

Lucifer. He was hinder'd.

Cain. Deadly error!
Not to snatch first that fruit:—but ere he pluck'd
The knowledge, he was ignorant of death.
Alas! I scarcely now know what it is,
And yet I fear it—fear I know not what!

Lucifer. And I, who know all things, fear nothing; see
What is true knowledge.

Cain. Wilt thou teach me all?

Lucifer. Ay, upon one condition.

Cain. Name it.

Lucifer. That
Thou dost fall down and worship me—thy Lord.

Cain. Thou art not the Lord my father worships.

Lucifer. No.

Cain. His equal?

Lucifer. No;—I have nought in common with him!
Nor would: I would be aught above—beneath—
Aught save a sharer or a servant of
His power. I dwell apart; but I am great:—
Many there are who worship me, and more
Who shall—be thou amongst the first.

Cain. I never
As yet have bow'd unto my father's God,
Although my brother Abel oft implores
That I would join with him in sacrifice:—
Why should I bow to thee?

Lucifer. Hast thou ne'er bow'd
To him?

Cain. Have I not said it?—need I say it!
Could not thy mighty knowledge teach thee that?

Lucifer. He who bows not to him has bow'd to me.

Cain. But I will bend to neither.

Lucifer. Ne'ertheless,
Thou art my worshipper ; not worshipping
Him makes thee mine the same.

Cain. And what is that ?

Lucifer. Thou 'lt know here—and hereafter.

Cain. Let me but
Be taught the mystery of my being.

Lucifer. Follow
Where I will lead thee.

Cain. But I must retire
To till the earth—for I had promised——

Lucifer. What ?

Cain. To cull some first-fruits.

Lucifer. Why ?

Cain. To offer up
With Abel on an altar.

Lucifer. Said'st thou not
Thou ne'er hadst bent to him who made thee ?

Cain. Yes—
But Abel's earnest prayer has wrought upon me.
The offering is more his than mine—and Adah——

Lucifer. Why dost thou hesitate ?

Cain. She is my sister,
Born on the same day, of the same womb ; and
She wrung from me, with tears, this promise ; and
Rather than see her weep, I would, methinks,
Bear all—and worship aught.

Lucifer. Then follow me !

Cain. I will.

Enter ADAH.

Adah. My brother, I have come for thee ;
It is our hour of rest and joy—and we
Have less without thee. Thou hast labour'd not
This morn ; but I have done thy task : the fruits
Are ripe, and glowing as the light which ripens :
Come away.

Cain. Seest thou not ?

Adah. I see an angel ;
We have seen many : will he share our hour
Of rest ?—he's welcome.

Cain. But he is not like
The angels we have seen.
Adah. Are there, then, others?
But he is welcome, as they were : they deign'd
To be our guests—will he?
Cain (to Lucifer). Wilt thou?
Lucifer. I ask
Thee to be mine.
Cain. I must away with him.
Adah. And leave us?
Cain. Ay.
Adah. And me?
Cain. Beloved Adah !
Adah. Let me go with thee.
Lucifer. No, she must not.
Adah. Who
Art thou that steppest between heart and heart?
Cain. He is a god.
Adah. How know'st thou?
Cain. He speaks like
A god.
Adah. So did the serpent, and it lied.
Lucifer. Thou errest, Adah !—was not the tree that
Of knowledge?
Adah. Ay—to our eternal sorrow. [not:
Lucifer. And yet that grief is knowledge—so he lied
And if he did betray you, 't was with truth ;
And truth in its own essence cannot be
But good.
Adah. But all we know of it has gather'd
Evil on ill ; expulsion from our home,
And dread, and toil, and sweat, and heaviness ;
Remorse of that which was—and hope of that
Which cometh not. Cain ! walk not with this spirit.
Bear with what we have borne, and love me—I
Love thee.
Lucifer. More than thy mother, and thy sire?
Adah. I do. Is that a sin, too?
Lucifer. No, not yet ;
It one day will be in your children.
Adah. What !
Must not my daughter love her brother Enoch?
Lucifer. Not as thou lovest Cain.

Adah.

Oh, my God !

Shall they not love and bring forth things that love
 Out of their love ? have they not drawn their milk
 Out of this bosom ? was not he, their father,
 Born of the same sole womb, in the same hour
 With me ? did we not love each other ? and
 In multiplying our being multiply
 Things which will love each other as we love
 Them ?—And as I love thee, my Cain ! go not
 Forth with this spirit ; he is not of ours.

Lucifer. The sin I speak of is not of my making,
 And cannot be a sin in you—whate'er
 It seem in those who will replace ye in
 Mortality.

Adah. What is the sin which is not
 Sin in itself ? Can circumstance make sin
 Or virtue ?—if it doth, we are the slaves
 Of——

Lucifer. Higher things than ye are slaves : and higher
 Than them or ye would be so, did they not
 Prefer an independency of torture
 To the smooth agonies of adulation,
 In hymns and harpings, and self-seeking prayers,
 To that which is omnipotent, because
 It is omnipotent, and not from love,
 But terror and self-hope.

Adah. Omnipotence
 Must be all goodness.

Lucifer. Was it so in Eden ? [fairer

Adah. Fiend ! tempt me not with beauty : thou art
 Than was the serpent, and as false.

Lucifer. As true.
 Ask Eve, your mother : bears she not the knowledge
 Of good and evil ?

Adah. Oh, my mother ! thou
 Hast pluck'd a fruit more fatal to thine offspring
 Than to thyself ; thou at the least hast pass'd
 Thy youth in Paradise, in innocent
 And happy intercourse with happy spirits ;
 But we, thy children, ignorant of Eden,
 Are girt about by demons, who assume
 The words of God, and tempt us with our own
 Dissatisfied and curious thoughts—as thou

Wert work'd on by the snake, in thy most flush'd
And heedless, harmless wantonness of bliss.
I cannot answer this immortal thing
Which stands before me ; I cannot abhor him ;
I look upon him with a pleasing fear,
And yet I fly not from him : in his eye
There is a fastening attraction which
Fixes my fluttering eyes on his ; my heart
Beats quick ; he awes me, and yet draws me near,
Nearer and nearer :—Cain—Cain—save me from him !

Cain. What dreads my Adah ? This is no ill spirit.

Adah. He is not God—nor God's : I have beheld
The cherubs and the seraphs ; he looks not
Like them.

Cain. But there are spirits loftier still—
The archangels.

Lucifer. And still loftier than the archangels.

Adah. Ay—but not blessed.

Lucifer. If the blessedness
Consists in slavery—no.

Adah. I have heard it said,
The seraphs *love most*—cherubim *know most*—
And this should be a cherub—since he loves not.

Lucifer. And if the higher knowledge quenches love,
What must *he be* you cannot love when known ?
Since the all-knowing cherubim love least,
The seraphs' love can be but ignorance :
That they are not compatible, the doom
Of thy fond parents, for their daring, proves.
Choose betwixt love and knowledge—since there is
No other choice : your sire hath chosen already :
His worship is but fear.

Adah. Oh, Cain ! choose love.

Cain. For thee, my Adah, I choose not—it was
Born with me—but I love nought else.

Adah. Our parents ?

Cain. Did they love us when they snatch'd from the tree
That which has driven us all from Paradise ?

Adah. We were not born then—and if we had been,
Should we not love them and our children, Cain ?

Cain. My little Enoch ! and his lisping sister !
Could I but deem them happy, I would half
Forget—but it can never be forgotten

Through thrice a thousand generations ! never
 Shall men love the remembrance of the man
 Who sow'd the seed of evil and mankind
 In the same hour ! They pluck'd the tree of science
 And sin—and, not content with their own sorrow,
 Begot *me—thee*—and all the few that are,
 And all the unnumber'd and innumerable
 Multitudes, millions, myriads, which may be,
 To inherit agonies accumulated
 By ages !—and *I* must be sire of such things !
 Thy beauty and thy love—my love and joy,
 The rapturous moment and the placid hour,
 All we love in our children and each other,
 But lead them and ourselves through many years
 Of sin and pain—or few, but still of sorrow,
 Intercheck'd with an instant of brief pleasure,
 To Death—the unknown ! Methinks the tree of know-
 ledge

Hath not fulfill'd its promise :—if they sinn'd,
 At least they ought to have known all things that are
 Of knowledge—and the mystery of death.
 What do they know ?—that they are miserable.
 What need of snakes and fruits to teach us that ?

Adah. I am not wretched, Cain, and if thou
 Wert happy——

Cain. Be thou happy, then, alone—
 I will have nought to do with happiness,
 Which humbles me and mine.

Adah. Alone I could not,
 Nor *would* be happy ; but with those around us
 I think I could be so, despite of death,
 Which, as I know it not, I dread not, though
 It seems an awful shadow—if I may
 Judge from what I have heard.

Lucifer. And thou couldst not
 Alone, thou say'st, be happy ?

Adah. Alone ! Oh, my God !
 Who could be happy and alone, or good ?
 To me my solitude seems sin ; unless
 When I think how soon I shall see my brother,
 His brother, and our children, and our parents.

Lucifer. Yet thy God is alone ; and is he happy,
 Lonely, and good ?

Adah. He is not so ; he hath
The angels and the mortals to make happy,
And thus becomes so in diffusing joy.
What else can joy be, but the spreading joy?

Lucifer. Ask of your sire, the exile fresh from Eden ;
Or of his first-born son : ask your own heart ;
It is not tranquil.

Adah. Alas ! no ! and you—
Are you of heaven ?

Lucifer. If I am not, inquire
The cause of this all-spreading happiness
(Which you proclaim) of the all-great and good
Maker of life and living things ; it is
His secret, and he keeps it. *We* must bear,
And some of us resist, and both in vain,
His seraphs say : but it is worth the trial,
Since better may not be without ; there is
A wisdom in the spirit, which directs
To right, as in the dim blue air the eye
Of you, young mortals, lights at once upon
The star which watches, welcoming the morn.

Adah. It is a beautiful star ; I love it for
Its beauty.

Lucifer. And why not adore ?

Adah. Our father
Adores the Invisible only.

Lucifer. But the symbols
Of the Invisible are the loveliest
Of what is visible ; and yon bright star
Is leader of the host of heaven.

Adah. Our father
Saith that he has beheld the God himself
Who made him and our mother.

Lucifer. Hast *thou* seen him ?

Adah. Yes—in his works.

Lucifer. But in his being ?

Adah. No—

Save in my father, who is God's own image ;
Or in his angels, who are like to thee—
And brighter, yet less beautiful and powerful
In seeming : as the silent sunny noon,
All light they look upon us ; but thou seem'st
Like an ethereal night, where long white clouds

Streak the deep purple, and unnumber'd stars
Spangle the wonderful mysterious vault
With things that look as if they would be suns ;
So beautiful, unnumber'd, and endearing,
Not dazzling, and yet drawing us to them,
They fill my eyes with tears, and so dost thou.
Thou seem'st unhappy : do not make us so,
And I will weep for thee.

Lucifer. Alas ! those tears !

Couldst thou but know what oceans will be shed—

Adah. By me ?

Lucifer. By all.

Adah. What all ?

Lucifer. The million millions—

The myriad myriads—the all-peopled earth—

The unpeopled earth—and the o'er-peopled hell,
Of which thy bosom is the germ.

Adah. O Cain !

This spirit curseth us.

Cain. Let him say on ;

Him will I follow.

Adah. Whither ?

Lucifer. To a place

Whence he shall come back to thee in an hour ;

But in that hour see things of many days.

Adah. How can that be ?

Lucifer. Did not your Maker make

Out of old worlds this new one in few days ?

And cannot I, who aided in this work,

Show in an hour what he hath made in many,

Or hath destroy'd in few ?

Cain. Lead on.

Adah. Will he,

In sooth, return within an hour ?

Lucifer. He shall.

With us acts are exempt from time, and we

Can crowd eternity into an hour,

Or stretch an hour into eternity :

We breathe not by a mortal measurement—

But that's a mystery. Cain, come on with me.

Adah. Will he return ?

Lucifer. Ay, woman ! he alone

Of mortals from that place (the first and last

Who shall return, save ONE), shall come back to thee,
To make that silent and expectant world
As populous as this : at present there
Are few inhabitants.

Adah. Where dwellest thou?

Lucifer. Throughout all space. Where should I dwell?

Where are

Thy God or Gods—there am I : all things are
Divided with me : life and death—and time—
Eternity—and heaven and earth—and that
Which is not heaven nor earth, but peopled with
Those who once peopled or shall people both—
These are my realms ! So that I do divide
His, and possess a kingdom which is not
His. If I were not that which I have said,
Could I stand here ? His angels are within
Your vision.

Aaah. So they were when the fair serpent
Spoke with our mother first.

Lucifer. Cain ! thou hast heard.
If thou dost long for knowledge, I can satiate
That thirst ; nor ask thee to partake of fruits
Which shall deprive thee of a single good
The conqueror has left thee. Follow me.

Cain. Spirit, I have said it.

[*Exeunt LUCIFER and CAIN.*]

Adah. (*follows exclaiming*). Cain ! my brother ! Cain !

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*The Abyss of Space.*

Cain. I tread on air, and sink not ; yet I fear
To sink.

Lucifer. Have faith in me, and thou shalt be
Borne on the air, of which I am the prince.

Cain. Can I do so without impiety?

Lucifer. Believe—and sink not ! doubt—and perish !
thus

Would run the edict of the other God,
Who names me demon to his angels ; they

Echo the sound to miserable things,
Which, knowing nought beyond their shallow senses,
Worship the word which strikes their ear, and deem
Evil or good what is proclaim'd to them
In their abasement. I will have none such :
Worship or worship not, thou shalt behold
The worlds beyond thy little world, nor be
Amerced for doubts beyond thy little life,
With torture of *my* dooming. There will come
An hour, when, toss'd upon some water-drops,
A man shall say to a man, " Believe in me,
And walk the waters ; " and the man shall walk
The billows and be safe. I will not say,
Believe in *me*, as a conditional creed
To save thee ; but fly with me o'er the gulf
Of space an equal flight, and I will show
What thou dar'st not deny,—the history
Of past, and present, and of future worlds.

Cain. Oh, god, or demon, or whate'er thou art,
Is yon our earth ?

Lucifer. Dost thou not recognise
The dust which form'd your father ?

Cain. Can it be ?
Yon small blue circle, swinging in far ether,
With an inferior circlet near it still,
Which looks like that which lit our earthly night ?
Is this our Paradise ? Where are its walls,
And they who guard them ?

Lucifer. Point me out the site
Of Paradise.

Cain. How should I ? As we move
Like sunbeams onward, it grows small and smaller,
And as it waxes little, and then less,
Gathers a halo round it, like the light
Which shone the roundest of the stars, when I
Beheld them from the skirts of Paradise :
Methinks they both, as we recede from them,
Appear to join the innumerable stars
Which are around us ; and, as we move on,
Increase their myriads.

Lucifer. And if there should be
Worlds greater than thine own, inhabited
By greater things, and they themselves far more

In number than the dust of thy dull earth,
Though multiplied to animated atoms,
All living, and all doom'd to death, and wretched,
What wouldst thou think?

Cain. I should be proud of thought
Which knew such things. .

Lucifer. But if that high thought were
Link'd to a servile mass of matter, and,
Knowing such things, aspiring to such things,
And science still beyond them, were chain'd down
To the most gross and petty paltry wants,
All foul and fulsome, and the very best
Of thine enjoyments a sweet degradation,
A most enervating and filthy cheat
To lure thee on to the renewal of
Fresh souls and bodies, all foredoom'd to be
As frail, and few so happy——

Cain. Spirit ! I
Know nought of death, save as a dreadful thing
Of which I have heard my parents speak, as of
A hideous heritage I owe to them
No less than life ; a heritage not happy,
If I may judge, till now. But, spirit ! if
It be as thou hast said (and I within
Feel the prophetic torture of its truth),
Here let me die : for to give birth to those
Who can but suffer many years, and die,
Methinks is merely propagating death,
And multiplying murder.

Lucifer. Thou canst not
All die—there is what must survive.

Cain. The Other
Spake not of this unto my father, when
He shut him forth from Paradise, with death
Written upon his forehead. But at least
Let what is mortal of me perish, that
I may be in the rest as angels are.

Lucifer. I am angelic : wouldst thou be as I am ?

Cain. I know not what thou art : I see thy power,
And see thou show'st me things beyond *my* power,
Beyond all power of my born faculties,
Although inferior still to my desires,
And my conceptions.

Lucifer. What are they which dwell
So humbly in their pride, as to sojourn
With worms in clay?

Cain. And what art thou who dwellest
So haughtily in spirit, and canst range
Nature and immortality—and yet
Seem'st sorrowful?

Lucifer. I seem that which I am,
And therefore do I ask of thee, if thou
Wouldst be immortal?

Cain. Thou hast said, I must be
Immortal in despite of me. I knew not
This until lately—but since it must be,
Let me, or happy or unhappy, learn
To anticipate my immortality.

Lucifer. Thou didst before I came upon thee.

Cain. How?

Lucifer. By suffering.

Cain. And must torture be immortal?

Lucifer. We and thy sons will try. But now, behold!
Is it not glorious?

Cain. Oh, thou beautiful
And unimaginable ether! and
Ye multiplying masses of increased
And still increasing lights! what are ye? what
Is this blue wilderness of interminable
Air, where ye roll along, as I have seen
The leaves along the limpid streams of Eden?
Is your course measured for ye? Or do ye
Sweep on in your unbounded revelry
Through an ærial universe of endless
Expansion—at which my soul aches to think—
Intoxicated with eternity?
Oh God! Oh Gods! or whatsoe'er ye are!
How beautiful ye are! how beautiful
Your works, or accidents, or whatsoe'er
They may be! Let me die, as atoms die
(If that they die), or know ye in your might
And knowledge! My thoughts are not in this hour
Unworthy what I see, though my dust is;
Spirit! let me expire, or see them nearer.

Lucifer. Art thou not nearer? look back to thine earth!

Cain. Where is it? I see nothing save a mass
Of most innumerable lights.

Lucifer. Look there!

Cain. I cannot see it.

Lucifer. Yet it sparkles still.

Cain. That!—yonder!

Lucifer. Yea.

Cain. And wilt thou tell me so?

Why, I have seen the fire-flies and fire-worms
Sprinkle the dusky groves and the green banks
In the dim twilight, brighter than yon world
Which bears them.

Lucifer. Thou hast seen both worms and worlds,
Each bright and sparkling—what dost think of them?

Cain. That they are beautiful in their own sphere,
And that the night, which makes both beautiful,
The little shining fire-fly in its flight,
And the immortal star in its great course,
Must both be guided.

Lucifer. But by whom or what?

Cain. Show me.

Lucifer. Dar'st thou behold?

Cain. How know I what

I *dare* behold? As yet, thou hast shown nought
I dare not gaze on further.

Lucifer. On, then, with me.
Wouldst thou behold things mortal or immortal?

Cain. Why, what are things?

Lucifer. Both partly: but what doth
Sit next thy heart?

Cain. The things I see.

Lucifer. But what
Sate nearest it?

Cain. The things I have not seen,
Nor ever shall—the mysteries of death.

Lucifer. What, if I show to thee things which have
died,
As I have shown thee much which cannot die?

Cain. Do so.

Lucifer. Away, then, on our mighty wings.

Cain. Oh! how we cleave the blue! The stars fade
from us!

The earth ! where is my earth ? Let me look on it,
For I was made of it.

Lucifer. 'T is now beyond thee,
Less, in the universe, than thou in it ;
Yet deem not that thou canst escape it ; thou
Shalt soon return to earth, and all its dust :
'T is part of thy eternity, and mine.

Cain. Where dost thou lead me ?

Lucifer. To what was before thee !
The phantasm of the world ; of which thy world
Is but the wreck.

Cain. What ! is it not then new ?

Lucifer. No more than life is ; and that was ere thou
Or *I* were, or the things which seem to us
Greater than either : many things will have
No end ; and some, which would pretend to have
Had no beginning, have had one as mean
As thou ; and mightier things have been extinct
To make way for much meaner than we can
Surmise ; for *moments* only and the *space*
Have been and must be all *unchangeable*.
But changes make not death, except to clay ;
But thou art clay—and canst but comprehend
That which was clay, and such thou shalt behold.

Cain. Clay, spirit ! what thou wilt, I can survey.

Lucifer. Away, then !

Cain. But the lights fade from me fast,
And some till now grew larger as we approach'd,
And wore the look of worlds.

Lucifer. And such they are.

Cain. And Edens in them ?

Lucifer. It may be.

Cain. And men ?

Lucifer. Yea, or things higher.

Cain. Ay ? and serpents too ?

Lucifer. Wouldst thou have men without them ? must
no reptiles

Breathe, save the erect ones ?

Cain. How the lights recede !

Where fly we ?

Lucifer. To the world of phantoms, which
Are beings past, and shadows still to come.

Cain. But it grows dark, and dark—the stars are gone!

Lucifer. And yet thou seest.

Cain. 'Tis a fearful light!

No sun, no moon, no lights innumerable.

The very blue of the empurpled night

Fades to a dreary twilight, yet I see

Huge dusky masses; but unlike the worlds

We were approaching, which, begirt with light,

Seem'd full of life even when their atmosphere

Of light gave way, and show'd them taking shapes

Unequal, of deep valleys and vast mountains;

And some emitting sparks, and some displaying

Enormous liquid plains, and some begirt

With luminous belts, and floating moons, which took,

Like them, the features of fair earth:—instead,

All here seems dark and dreadful.

Lucifer.

But distinct.

Thou seekest to behold death, and dead things?

Cain. I seek it not; but as I know there are

Such, and that my sire's sin makes him and me,

And all that we inherit, liable

To such, I would behold at once, what I

Must one day see perforce.

Lucifer.

Behold!

Cain.

'Tis darkness.

Lucifer. And so it shall be ever; but we will

Unfold its gates!

Cain.

Enormous vapours roll

Apart—what's this?

Lucifer.

Enter!

Cain.

Can I return?

Lucifer. Return! be sure: how else should death be
peopled?

Its present realm is thin to what it will be,

Through thee and thine.

Cain.

The clouds still open wide

And wider, and make widening circles round us.

Lucifer. Advance!

Cain.

And thou!

Lucifer.

Fear not—without me thou

Couldst not have gone beyond thy world. On! on!

[*They disappear through the clouds.*]

SCENE II.

*Hades.**Enter LUCIFER and CAIN.*

Cain. How silent and how vast are these dim worlds !
 For they seem more than one, and yet more peopled
 Than the huge brilliant luminous orbs which swung
 So thickly in the upper air, that I
 Had deem'd them rather the bright populace
 Of some all unimaginable Heaven,
 Than things to be inhabited themselves,
 But that on drawing near them I beheld
 Their swelling into palpable immensity
 Of matter which seem'd made for life to dwell on,
 Rather than life itself. But here, all is
 So shadowy, and so full of twilight, that
 It speaks of a day past.

Lucifer. It is the realm
 Of death.—Wouldst have it present ?

Cain. Till I know
 That which it really is, I cannot answer.
 But if it be as I have heard my father
 Deal out in his long homilies, 't is a thing—
 Oh God ! I dare not think on 't ! Cursed be
 He who invented life that leads to death !
 Or the dull mass of life, that, being life,
 Could not retain, but needs must forfeit it—
 Even for the innocent !

Lucifer. Dost thou curse thy father ?

Cain. Cursed he not me in giving me my birth ?
 Cursed he not me before my birth, in daring
 To pluck the fruit forbidden ?

Lucifer. Thou say'st well :
 The curse is mutual 'twixt thy sire and thee—
 But for thy sons and brother ?

Cain. Let them share it
 With me, their sire and brother ! What else is
 Bequeath'd to me ? I leave them my inheritance.
 Oh, ye interminable gloomy realms
 Of swimming shadows and enormous shapes,
 Some fully shown, some indistinct, and all

Mighty and melancholy—what are ye?

Live ye, or have ye lived?

Lucifer. Somewhat of both.

Cain. Then what is death?

Lucifer. What! Hath not he who made ye
Said 't is another life?

Cain. Till now he hath
Said nothing, save that all shall die.

Lucifer. Perhaps
He one day will unfold that further secret.

Cain. Happy the day!

Lucifer. Yes; happy! when unfolded,
Through agonies unspeakable, and clogg'd
With agonies eternal, to innumerable
Yet unborn myriads of unconscious atoms,
All to be animated for this only!

Cain. What are these mighty phantoms which I see
Floating around me?—They wear not the form
Of the intelligences I have seen
Round our regretted and unenter'd Eden,
Nor wear the form of man as I have view'd it
In Adam's and in Abel's, and in mine,
Nor in my sister-bride's, nor in my children's:
And yet they have an aspect, which, though not
Of men nor angels, looks like something which,
If not the last, rose higher than the first,
Haughty, and high, and beautiful, and full
Of seeming strength, but of inexplicable
Shape; for I never saw such. They bear not
The wing of seraph, nor the face of man,
Nor form of mightiest brute, nor aught that is
Now breathing; mighty yet and beautiful
As the most beautiful and mighty which
Live, and yet so unlike them, that I scarce
Can call them living.

Lucifer. Yet they lived.

Cain. Where?

Lucifer. Where

Thou livest.

Cain. When?

Lucifer. On what thou callest earth
They did inhabit.

Cain. Adam is the first.

Lucifer. Of thine, I grant thee—but too mean to be
The last of these.

Cain. And what are they?

Lucifer. That which
Thou shalt be.

Cain. But what *were* they?

Lucifer. Living, high,
Intelligent, good, great, and glorious things,
As much superior unto all thy sire,
Adam, could e'er have been in Eden, as
The sixty-thousandth generation shall be,
In its dull damp degeneracy, to
Thee and thy son;—and how weak they are, judge
By thy own flesh.

Cain. Ah me! and did *they* perish?

Lucifer. Yes, from their earth, as thou wilt fade from
thine.

Cain. But was *mine* theirs?

Lucifer. It was.

Cain. But not as now.

It is too little and too lowly to
Sustain such creatures.

Lucifer. True, it was more glorious.

Cain. And wherefore did it fall?

Lucifer. Ask him who fells.

Cain. But how?

Lucifer. By a most crushing and inexorable
Destruction and disorder of the elements,
Which struck a world to chaos, as a chaos
Subsiding has struck out a world: such things,
Though rare in time, are frequent in eternity.—
Pass on, and gaze upon the past.

Cain. 'T is awful!

Lucifer. And true. Behold these phantoms! they were
once
Material as thou art.

Cain. And must I be
Like them?

Lucifer. Let him who made thee answer that.
I show thee what thy predecessors are,
And what they *were* thou feeblest, in degree
Inferior as thy petty feelings and
Thy pettier portion of the immortal part

Of high intelligence and earthly strength.
What ye in common have with what they had
Is life, and what ye *shall* have—death: the rest
Of your poor attributes is such as suits
Reptiles engender'd out of the subsiding
Slime of a mighty universe, crush'd into
A scarcely yet shaped planet, peopled with
Things whose enjoyment was to be in blindness—
A Paradise of Ignorance, from which
Knowledge was barr'd as poison. But behold
What these superior beings are or were ;
Or, if it irk thee, turn thee back and till
The earth, thy task—I'll waft thee there in safety.

Cain. No : I'll stay here.

Lucifer. How long ?

Cain. For ever ! Since
I must one day return here from the earth,
I rather would remain ; I am sick of all
That dust has shown me—let me dwell in shadows.

Lucifer. It cannot be : thou now beholdest as
A vision that which is reality.
To make thyself fit for this dwelling, thou
Must pass through what the things thou see'st have
pass'd—

The gates of death.

Cain. By what gate have we enter'd
Even now ?

Lucifer. By mine ! But, plighted to return,
My spirit buoys thee up to bathe in regions
Where all is breathless save thyself. Gaze on ;
But do not think to dwell here till thine hour
Is come.

Cain. And these, too ; can they ne'er repass
To earth again ?

Lucifer. Their earth is gone for ever—
So changed by its convulsion, they would not
Be conscious to a single present spot
Of its new scarcely harden'd surface—'t was—
Oh, what a beautiful world it *was* !

Cain. And is.
It is not with the earth, though I must till it,
I feel at war, but that I may not profit
By what it bears of beautiful, untailing,

Nor gratify my thousand swelling thoughts
With knowledge, nor allay my thousand fears
Of death and life.

Lucifer. What thy world is thou see'st,
But canst not comprehend the shadow of
That which it was.

Cain. And those enormous creatures,
Phantoms inferior in intelligence
(At least so seeming) to the things we've pass'd,
Resembling somewhat the wild habitants
Of the deep woods of earth, the hugest which
Roar nightly in the forest, but ten-fold
In magnitude and terror; taller than
The cherub-guarded walls of Eden, with
Eyes flashing like the fiery swords which fence them,
And tusks projecting like the trees stripp'd of
Their bark and branches—what were they?

Lucifer. That which
The Mammoth is in thy world;—but these lie
By myriads underneath its surface.

Cain. But
None on it?

Lucifer. No: for thy frail race to war
With them would render the curse on it useless—
'T would be destroy'd so early.

Cain. But why war?

Lucifer. You have forgotten the denunciation
Which drove your race from Eden—war with all things,
And death to all things, and disease to most things,
And pangs, and bitterness; these were the fruits
Of the forbidden tree.

Cain. But animals—
Did they, too, eat of it, that they must die?

Lucifer. Your Maker told ye, *they* were made for you,
As you for him.—You would not have their doom
Superior to your own? Had Adam not
Fallen, all had stood.

Cain. Alas! the hopeless wretches!
They too must share my sire's fate, like his sons;
Like them, too, without having shared the apple;
Like them, too, without the so dear-bought *knowledge*!
It was a lying tree—for we *know* nothing.

At least it *promised knowledge* at the *price*
Of death—but *knowledge* still ; but what *knows* man ?

Lucifer. It may be death leads to the *highest* knowledge ;
And being of all things the sole thing certain,
At least leads to the *surest* science : therefore
The tree was true, though deadly.

Cain. These dim realms !
I see them, but I know them not.

Lucifer. Because
Thy hour is yet afar, and matter cannot
Comprehend spirit wholly—but 't is something
To know there are such realms.

Cain. We knew already
That there was death.

Lucifer. But not what was beyond it.

Cain. Nor know I now.

Lucifer. Thou knowest that there is
A state, and many states, beyond thine own—
And this thou knewest not this morn.

Cain. But all
Seems dim and shadowy.

Lucifer. Be content ; it will
Seem clearer to thine immortality.

Cain. And yon immeasurable liquid space
Of glorious azure which floats on beyond us,
Which looks like water, and which I should deem
The river which flows out of Paradise
Past my own dwelling, but that it is bankless
And boundless, and of an ethereal hue—
What is it ?

Lucifer. There is still some such on earth,
Although inferior, and thy children shall
Dwell near it—'t is the phantasm of an ocean.

Cain. 'T is like another world ; a liquid sun—
And those inordinate creatures sporting o'er
Its shining surface ?

Lucifer. Are its inhabitants,
The past leviathans.

Cain. And yon immense
Serpent, which rears his dripping mane and vasty
Head ten times higher than the haughtiest cedar
Forth from the abyss, looking as he could coil

Himself around the orbs we lately look'd on—
Is he not of the kind which bask'd beneath
The tree in Eden?

Lucifer. Eve, thy mother, best
Can tell what shape of serpent tempted her.

Cain. This seems too terrible. No doubt the other
Had more of beauty.

Lucifer. Hast thou ne'er beheld him?

Cain. Many of the same kind (at least so call'd),
But never that precisely which persuaded
The fatal fruit, nor even of the same aspect.

Lucifer. Your father saw him not?

Cain. No: 't was my mother
Who tempted him—she tempted by the serpent.

Lucifer. Good man! when'er thy wife, or thy sons'
wives,

Tempt thee or them to aught that's new or strange,
Be sure thou see'st first who hath tempted *them*.

Cain. Thy precept comes too late: there is no more
For serpents to tempt woman to.

Lucifer. But there
Are some things still which woman may tempt man to,
And man tempt woman:—let thy sons look to it!
My counsel is a kind one; for 't is even
Given chiefly at my own expense; 't is true,
'T will not be follow'd, so there's little lost.

Cain. I understand not this.

Lucifer. The happier thou!—
Thy world and thou are still too young! 'Thou thinkest
Thyself most wicked and unhappy: is it
Not so?

Cain. For crime, I know not; but for pain,
I have felt much!

Lucifer. First-born of the first man!
Thy present state of sin, and thou art evil—
Of sorrow, and thou sufferest—are both Eden
In all its innocence compared to what
Thou shortly may'st be; and that state again,
In its redoubled wretchedness, a Paradise
To what thy sons' sons' sons, accumulating
In generations like to dust (which they
In fact but add to), shall endure and do.—
Now let us back to earth!

Cain. And wherefore didst thou
Lead me here only to inform me this?

Lucifer. Was not thy quest for knowledge?

Cain. Yes; as being
The road to happiness.

Lucifer. If truth be so,
Thou hast it.

Cain. Then my father's God did well
When he prohibited the fatal tree.

Lucifer. But had done better in not planting it.
But ignorance of evil doth not save
From evil; it must still roll on the same,
A part of all things.

Cain. Not of all things. No:
I'll not believe it—for I thirst for good.

Lucifer. And who and what doth not? *Who* covets evil
For its own bitter sake?—*None*—nothing! 't is
The leaven of all life, and lifelessness.

Cain. Within those glorious orbs which we beheld,
Distant, and dazzling, and innumerable,
Ere we came down into this phantom realm,
Ill cannot come: they are too beautiful.

Lucifer. Thou hast seen them from afar.

Cain. And what of that?
Distance can but diminish glory—they,
When nearer, must be more ineffable.

Lucifer. Approach the things of earth most beautiful,
And judge their beauty near.

Cain. I have done this—
The loveliest thing I know is loveliest nearest.

Lucifer. Then there must be delusion.—What is that
Which being nearest to thine eyes is still
More beautiful than beauteous things remote?

Cain. My sister Adah.—All the stars of heaven,
The deep blue noon of night, lit by an orb
Which looks a spirit, or a spirit's world—
The hues of twilight—the sun's gorgeous coming—
His setting indescribable, which fills
My eyes with pleasant tears as I behold
Him sink, and feel my heart float softly with him
Along that western paradise of clouds,
The forest shade, the green bough, the bird's voice—
The vesper bird's, which seems to sing of love,

And mingles with the song of cherubim,
 As the day closes over Eden's walls :—
 All these are nothing, to my eyes and heart,
 Like Adah's face : I turn from earth and heaven
 To gaze on it.

Lucifer. 'Tis fair as frail mortality
 In the first dawn and bloom of young creation,
 And earliest embraces of earth's parents,
 Can make its offspring ; still it is delusion.

Cain. You think so, being not her brother.

Lucifer. Mortal !
 My brotherhood's with those who have no children.

Cain. Then thou canst have no fellowship with us.

Lucifer. It may be that thine own shall be for me.
 But if thou dost possess a beautiful
 Being beyond all beauty in thine eyes,
 Why art thou wretched ?

Cain. Why do I exist ?
 Why art *thou* wretched ? why are all things so ?
 Even he who made us must be, as the maker
 Of things unhappy ! To produce destruction
 Can surely never be the task of joy,
 And yet my sire says he's omnipotent :
 Then why is evil—he being good ? I ask'd
 This question of my father ; and he said,
 Because this evil only was the path
 To good. Strange good, that must arise from out
 Its deadly opposite ! I lately saw
 A lamb stung by a reptile : the poor suckling
 Lay foaming on the earth, beneath the vain
 And piteous bleating of its restless dam ;
 My father pluck'd some herbs, and laid them to
 The wound ; and by degrees the helpless wretch
 Resumed its careless life, and rose to drain
 The mother's milk, who o'er it tremulous
 Stood licking its reviving limbs with joy.
 Behold, my son ! said Adam, how from evil
 Springs good !

Lucifer. What didst thou answer ?

Cain. Nothing ; for
 He is my father : but I thought, that 't were
 A better portion for the animal
 Never to have been *stung at all*, than to

Purchase renewal of its little life
With agonies unutterable, though
Dispell'd by antidotes.

Lucifer. But as thou saidst
Of all beloved things thou lovest her
Who shared thy mother's milk and giveth hers
Unto thy children——

Cain. Most assuredly :
What should I be without her ?

Lucifer. What am I ?

Cain. Dost thou love nothing ?

Lucifer. What does thy God love ?

Cain. All things, my father says ; but I confess
I see it not in their allotment here.

Lucifer. And, therefore, thou canst not see if I love
Or no, except some vast and general purpose,
To which particular things must melt like snows.

Cain. Snows ! what are they ?

Lucifer. Be happier in not knowing
What thy remoter offspring must encounter ;
But bask beneath the clime which knows no winter.

Cain. But dost thou not love something like thyself ?

Lucifer. And dost thou love *thyself* ?

Cain. Yes, but love more
What makes my feelings more endurable,
And is more than myself, because I love it.

Lucifer. Thou lovest it, because 't is beautiful,
As was the apple in thy mother's eye ;
And when it ceases to be so, thy love
Will cease, like any other appetite.

Cain. Cease to be beautiful ! how can that be ?

Lucifer. With time.

Cain. But time has pass'd, and hitherto
Even Adam and my mother both are fair :
Not fair like Adah and the seraphim—
But very fair.

Lucifer. All that must pass away
In them and her.

Cain. I'm sorry for it ; but
Cannot conceive my love for her the less :
And when her beauty disappears, methinks
He who creates all beauty will lose more
Than me in seeing perish such a work.

Lucifer. I pity thee who lovest what must perish.

Cain. And I thee who lov'st nothing.

Lucifer. And thy brother—

Sits he not near thy heart?

Cain. Why should he not?

Lucifer. Thy father loves him well—so does thy God.

Cain. And so do I.

Lucifer. 'T is well and meekly done.

Cain. Meekly!

Lucifer. He is the second born of flesh,
And is his mother's favourite.

Cain. Let him keep
Her favour, since the serpent was the first
To win it.

Lucifer. And his father's?

Cain. What is that
To me? should I not love that which all love?

Lucifer. And the Jehovah—the indulgent Lord,
And bounteous planter of barr'd Paradise—
He, too, looks smilingly on Abel.

Cain. I
Ne'er saw him, and I know not if he smiles.

Lucifer. But you have seen his angels.

Cain. Rarely.

Lucifer. But
Sufficiently to see they love your brother:
His sacrifices are acceptable.

Cain. So be they! wherefore speak to me of this?

Lucifer. Because thou hast thought of this ere now.

Cain. And if

I have thought, why recall a thought that—*(he pauses, as agitated)*—Spirit!

Here we are in *thy* world; speak not of *mine*.

Thou hast shown me wonders; thou hast shown me those
Mighty pre-Adamites who walk'd the earth
Of which ours is the wreck: thou hast pointed out
Myriads of starry worlds, of which our own
Is the dim and remote companion, in
Infinity of life: thou hast shown me shadows
Of that existence with the dreaded name
Which my sire brought us—Death; thou hast shown me
much—

But not all; show me where Jehovah dwells,

In his especial Paradise—or *thine* :
Where is it ?

Lucifer. *Here*, and o'er all space.

Cain.

But ye

Have some allotted dwelling—as all things ;
Clay has its earth, and other worlds their tenants ;
All temporary breathing creatures their
Peculiar element ; and things which have
Long ceased to breathe *our* breath, have theirs, thou say'st ;
And the Jehovah and thyself have thine—
Ye do not dwell together ?

Lucifer.

No, we reign

Together ; but our dwellings are asunder.

Cain. Would there were only one of ye ! perchance
An unity of purpose might make union
In elements which seem now jarr'd in storms.
How came ye, being spirits, wise and infinite,
To separate ? Are ye not as brethren in
Your essence, and your nature, and your glory ?

Lucifer. Art thou not Abel's brother ?

Cain.

We are brethren,

And so we shall remain ; but were it not so,
Is spirit like to flesh ? can it fall out ?
Infinity with Immortality ?
Jarring and turning space to misery—
For what ?

Lucifer. To reign.

Cain.

Did ye not tell me that

Ye 're both eternal ?

Lucifer.

Yea !

Cain.

And what I have seen,

Yon blue immensity, is boundless ?

Lucifer.

Ay.

Cain. And cannot ye both *reign*, then ?—is there not
Enough ?—why should ye differ ?

Lucifer.

We *both* reign.

Cain. But one of you makes evil.

Lucifer.

Which ?

Cain.

Thou ! for

If thou canst do man good, why dost thou not ?

Lucifer. And why not he who made ? *I* made ye not ;
Ye are *his* creatures, and not mine.

Cain. Then leave us
His creatures, as thou say'st we are, or show me
Thy dwelling, or his dwelling.

Lucifer. I could show thee
Both ; but the time will come thou shalt see one
Of them for evermore.

Cain. And why not now?

Lucifer. Thy human mind hath scarcely grasp to gather
The little I have sown thee into calm
And clear thought ; and thou wouldst go on aspiring
To the great double mysteries ! the *two Principles* !
And gaze upon them on their secret thrones !
Dust ! limit thy ambition ; for to see
Either of these would be for thee to perish !

Cain. And let me perish, so I see them !

Lucifer. There
The son of her who snatch'd the apple spake !
But thou wouldst only perish, and not see them ;
That sight is for the other state.

Cain. Of death?

Lucifer. That is the prelude.

Cain. Then I dread it less,
Now that I know it leads to something definite.

Lucifer. And now I will convey thee to thy world,
Where thou shalt multiply the race of Adam,
Eat, drink, toil, tremble, laugh, weep, sleep, and die.

Cain. And to what end have I beheld these things
Which thou hast shown me?

Lucifer. Didst thou not require
Knowledge? And have I not, in what I show'd,
Taught thee to know thyself?

Cain. Alas ! I seem
Nothing.

Lucifer. And this should be the human sum
Of knowledge, to know mortal nature's nothingness ;
Bequeath that science to thy children, and
'T will spare them many tortures.

Cain. Haughty spirit !
Thou speak'st it proudly ; but thyself, though proud,
Hast a superior.

Lucifer. No ! by heaven, which He
Holds, and the abyss, and the immensity
Of worlds and life, which I hold with him—No !

I have a victor—true ; but no superior.
Homage he has from all—but none from me ;
I battle it against him, as I battled
In highest heaven. Through all eternity,
And the unfathomable gulfs of Hades,
And the interminable realms of space,
And the infinity of endless ages,
All, all, will I dispute ! And world by world,
And star by star, and universe by universe,
Shall tremble in the balance, till the great
Conflict shall cease, if ever it shall cease,
Which it ne'er shall, till he or I be quench'd ?
And what can quench our immortality,
Or mutual and irrevocable hate ?
He as a conqueror will call the conquer'd
Evil ; but what will be the *good* he gives ?
Were I the victor, *his* works would be deem'd
The only evil ones. And you, ye new
And scarce born mortals, what have been his gifts
To you already, in your little world ?

Cain. But few ; and some of those but bitter.

Lucifer.

Back

With me, then, to thine earth, and try the rest
Of his celestial boon to you and yours.
Evil and good are things in their own essence,
And not made good or evil by the giver ;
But if he gives you good—so call him ; if
Evil springs from *him*, do not name it *mine*,
Till ye know better its true fount ; and judge
Not by words, though of spirits, but the fruits
Of your existence, such as it must be.
One good gift has the fatal apple given—
Your *reason* :—let it not be over-sway'd
By tyrannous threats to force you into faith
'Gainst all external sense and inward feeling :
Think and endure,—and form an inner world
In your own bosom—where the outward fails ;
So shall you nearer be the spiritual
Nature, and war triumphant with your own.

[*They disappear.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The Earth, near Eden, as in Act I.**Enter CAIN and ADAH.**Adah.* Hush, tread softly, Cain.*Cain.* I will ; but wherefore ?*Adah.* Our little Enoch s'leeps upon yon bed
Of leaves, beneath the cypress.*Cain.* Cypress ! 't is
A gloomy tree, which looks as if it mourn'd
O'er what it shadows ; wherefore didst thou choose it
For our child's canopy ?*Adah.* Because its branches
Shut out the sun like night, and therefore seem'd
Fitting to shadow slumber.*Cain.* Ay, the last—
And longest ; but no matter—lead me to him.[*They go up to the child.*]
How lovely he appears ! his little cheeks,
In their pure incarnation, vying with
The rose leaves strewn beneath them.*Adah.* And his lips, too,
How beautifully parted ! No ; you shall not
Kiss him, at least not now ; he will awake soon.
His hour of mid-day rest is nearly over ;
But it were pity to disturb him till
'T is closed.*Cain.* You have said well ; I will contain
My heart till then. He smiles, and sleeps !—Sleep on,
And smile, thou little, young inheritor
Of a world scarce less young : sleep on, and smile !
Thine are the hours and days when both are cheering
And innocent ! *thou* hast not pluck'd the fruit—
Thou know'st not thou art naked ! Must the time
Come thou shalt be amerced for sins unknown,
Which were not thine nor mine ? But now sleep on !
His cheeks are reddening into deeper smiles,
And shining lids are trembling o'er his long
Lashes, dark as the cypress which waves o'er them ;
Half open, from beneath them the clear blue
Laughs out, although in slumber. He must dream—

Of what? Of Paradise!—Ay! dream of it,
My disinherited boy! 'T is but a dream;
For never more thyself, thy sons, nor fathers,
Shall walk in that forbidden place of joy!

Adah. Dear Cain! Nay, do not whisper o'er our son
Such melancholy yearnings o'er the past:
Why wilt thou always mourn for Paradise?
Can we not make another?

Cain. Where?

Adah. Here, or
Where'er thou wilt: where'er thou art, I feel not
The want of this so much regretted Eden.
Have I not thee, our boy, our sire, and brother,
And Zillah—our sweet sister, and our Eve,
To whom we owe so much besides our birth?

Cain. Yes—death, too, is amongst the debts we owe
her.

Adah. Cain! that proud spirit, who withdrew thee
hence,
Hath sadden'd thine still deeper. I had hoped
The promised wonders which thou hast beheld,
Visions, thou say'st, of past and present worlds,
Would have composed thy mind into the calm
Of a contented knowledge; but I see
Thy guide hath done thee evil: still I thank him,
And can forgive him all, that he so soon
Hath given thee back to us.

Cain. So soon?

Adah. 'T is scarcely
Two hours since ye departed: two *long* hours
To *me*, but only *hours* upon the sun.

Cain. And yet I have approach'd that sun, and seen
Worlds which he once shone on, and never more
Shall light; and worlds he never lit: methought
Years had roll'd o'er my absence.

Adah. Hardly hours.

Cain. The mind then hath capacity of time,
And measures it by that which it beholds,
Pleasing or painful; little or almighty.
I had beheld the immemorial works
Of endless beings; skirr'd extinguish'd worlds;
And, gazing on eternity, methought
I had borrow'd more by a few drops of ages

From its immensity : but now I feel
My littleness again. Well said the spirit,
That I was nothing !

Adah. Wherefore said he so?
Jehovah said not that.

Cain. No : *he* contents him
With making us the *nothing* which we are ;
And after flattering dust with glimpses of
Eden and Immortality, resolves
It back to dust again—for what ?

Adah. Thou know'st—
Even for our parents' error.

Cain. What is that
To us ? they sinn'd, then *let them* die !

Adah. Thou hast not spoken well, nor is that thought
Thy own, but of the spirit who was with thee.
Would *I* could die for them, so *they* might live !

Cain. Why, so say I—provided that one victim
Might satiate the insatiable of life,
And that our little rosy sleeper there
Might never taste of death nor human sorrow,
Nor hand it down to those who spring from him.

Adah. How know we that some such atonement one
day
May not redeem our race ?

Cain. By sacrificing
The harmless for the guilty ? what atonement
Were there ? why, *we* are innocent : what have *we*
Done, that we must be victims for a deed
Before our birth, or need have victims to
Atone for this mysterious, nameless sin—
If it be such a sin to seek for knowledge ?

Adah. Alas ! thou sinnest now, my Cain : thy words
Sound impious in mine ears.

Cain. Then leave me !

Adah. Never,
Though thy God left thee.

Cain. Say, what have we here ?

Adah. Two altars, which our brother Abel made
During thine absence, whereupon to offer
A sacrifice to God on thy return.

Cain. And how knew *he*, that *I* would be so ready
With the burnt offerings which he daily brings

With a meek brow, whose base humility
Shows more of fear than worship, as a bribe
To the Creator?

Adah. Surely, 't is well done.

Cain. One altar may suffice; *I* have no offering.

Adah. The fruits of the earth, the early, beautiful
Blossom and bud, and bloom of flowers and fruits;
These are a goodly offering to the Lord,
Given with a gentle and a contrite spirit.

Cain. I've toil'd and till'd and sweaten in the sun,
According to the curse:—must I do more?
For what should I be gentle? for a war
With all the elements ere they will yield
The bread we eat? For what must I be grateful?
For being dust, and grovelling in the dust,
'Till I return to dust? If I am nothing—
For nothing shall I be an hypocrite,
And seem well-pleased with pain? For what should I
Be contrite? for my father's sin, a ready
Expiate with what we all have undergone,
And to be more than expiated by
The ages prophesied, upon our seed.
Little deems our young blooming sleeper, there,
The germs of an eternal misery
To myriads is within him! better 't were
I snatch'd him in his sleep, and dash'd him 'gainst
The rocks, than let him live to—

Adah. Oh, my God!

Touch not the child—my child! *thy* child! Oh, Cain!

Cain. Fear not! for all the stars, and all the power
Which sways them, I would not accost yon infant
With ruder greeting than a father's kiss.

Adah. Then, why so awful in thy speech?

Cain. I said

'T were better that he ceased to live, than give
Life to so much of sorrow as he must
Endure, and, harder still, bequeath; but since
That saying jars you, let us only say—
'T were better that he never had been born.

Adah. Oh, do not say so! Where were then the joys,
The mother's joys of watching, nourishing,
And loving him? Soft! he awakes. Sweet Enoch!

[*She goes to the child.*]

Oh, Cain ! look on him ; see how full of life,
 Of strength, of bloom, of beauty, and of joy,
 How like to me—how like to thee, when gentle,
 For *then* we are *all* alike ; is 't not so, Cain ?
 Mother, and sire, and son, our features are
 Reflected in each other ; as they are
 In the clear waters, when *they* are *gentle*, and
 When *thou* art *gentle*. Love us, then, my Cain !
 And love thyself for our sakes, for we love thee.
 Look ! how he laughs and stretches out his arms,
 And opens wide his blue eyes upon thine,
 To hail his father ; while his little form
 Flutters as wing'd with joy. Talk not of pain !
 The childless cherubs well might envy thee
 The pleasures of a parent ! Bless him, Cain !
 As yet he hath no words to thank thee, but
 His heart will, and thine own too.

Cain. Bless thee, boy !

If that a mortal blessing may avail thee,
 To save thee from the serpent's curse !

Adah. It shall.

Surely a father's blessing may avert
 A reptile's subtlety.

Cain. Of that I doubt ;
 But bless him ne'ertheless.

Adah. Our brother comes.

Cain. Thy brother Abel.

Enter ABEL.

Abel. Welcome, Cain ! My brother,
 The peace of God be on thee !

Cain. Abel, hail !

Abel. Our sister tells me that thou hast been wandering,
 In high communion with a spirit, far
 Beyond our wonted range. Was he of those
 We have seen and spoken with, like to our father ?

Cain. No.

Abel. Why then commune with him ? he may be
 A foe to the Most High.

Cain. And friend to man.
 Has the Most High been so—if so you term him ?

Abel. Term him ! your words are strange to-day, my
 brother.

My sister Adah, leave us for awhile—
We mean to sacrifice.

Adah. Farewell, my Cain;
But first embrace thy son. May his soft spirit,
And Abel's pious ministry, recall thee
To peace and holiness! [*Exit ADAH, with her child.*]

Abel. Where hast thou been?

Cain. I know not.

Abel. Nor what thou hast seen?

Cain. The dead,
The immortal, the unbounded, the omnipotent,
The overpowering mysteries of space—
The innumerable worlds that were and are—
A whirlwind of such overwhelming things,
Suns, moons, and earths, upon their loud-voiced spheres
Singing in thunder round me, as have made me
Unfit for mortal converse: leave me, Abel.

Abel. Thine eyes are flashing with unnatural light—
Thy cheek is flush'd with an unnatural hue—
Thy words are fraught with an unnatural sound—
What may this mean?

Cain. It means—I pray thee, leave me.

Abel. Not till we've pray'd and sacrificed together.

Cain. Abel, I pray thee, sacrifice alone—
Jehovah loves thee well.

Abel. Both well, I hope.

Cain. But thee the better: I care not for that;
Thou art fitter for his worship than I am;
Revere him, then—but let it be alone—
At least, without me.

Abel. Brother, I should ill
Deserve the name of our great father's son,
If, as my elder, I revered thee not,
And in the worship of our God, call'd not
On thee to join me, and precede me in
Our priesthood—'t is thy place.

Cain. But I have ne'er
Asserted it.

Abel. The more my grief; I pray thee
To do so now: thy soul seems labouring in
Some strong delusion; it will calm thee.

Cain. No;
Nothing can calm me more. *Calm! say I? Never*

Knew I what calm was in the soul, although
I have seen the elements still'd. My Abel, leave me!
Or let me leave thee to thy pious purpose.

Abel. Neither; we must perform our task together.
Spurn me not.

Cain. If it must be so——well, then,
What shall I do?

Abel. Choose one of those two altars.

Cain. Choose for me: they to me are so much turf
And stone.

Abel. Choose thou!

Cain. I've chosen.

Abel. 'Tis the highest,
And suits thee, as the elder. Now prepare
Thine offerings.

Cain. Where are thine?

Abel. Behold them here—
The firstlings of the flock, and fat thereof—
A shepherd's humble offering.

Cain. I have no flocks;
I am a tiller of the ground, and must
Yield what it yieldeth to my toil—its fruit:
[*He gathers fruit.*]
Behold them in their various bloom and ripeness.

[*They dress their altars, and kindle a flame upon them.*]

Abel. My brother, as the elder, offer first
Thy prayer and thanksgiving with sacrifice.

Cain. No—I am new to this; lead thou the way,
And I will follow—as I may.

Abel. (*kneceling*). Oh, God!
Who made us, and who breathed the breath of life
Within our nostrils, who hath blessed us,
And spared, despite our father's sin, to make
His children all lost, as they might have been,
Had not thy justice been so temper'd with
The mercy which is thy delight, as to
Accord a pardon like a Paradise,
Compared with our great crimes:—Sole Lord of light,
Of good, and glory, and eternity!
Without whom all were evil, and with whom
Nothing can err, except to some good end
Of thine omnipotent benevolence—

Inscrutable, but still to be fulfill'd—
Accept from out thine humble first of shepherd's
First of the first-born flocks—an offering,
In itself nothing—as what offering can be
Aught unto thee?—but yet accept it for
The thanksgiving of him who spreads it in
The face of thy high heaven, bowing his own
Even to the dust, of which he is, in honour
Of thee, and of thy name, for evermore!

Cain (standing erect during this speech).

Spirit! whate'er or whosoe'er thou art,
Omnipotent, it may be—and, if good,
Shown in the exemption of thy deeds from evil;
Jehovah upon earth! and God in heaven!
And it may be with other names, because
Thine attributes seem many, as thy works:—
If thou must be propitiated with prayers,
Take them! If thou must be induced with altars,
And soften'd with a sacrifice, receive them!
Two beings here erect them unto thee.
If thou lov'st blood, the shepherd's shrine, which smokes
On my right hand, hath shed it for thy service
In the first of his flock, whose limbs now reek
In sanguinary incense to thy skies;
Or if the sweet and blooming fruits of earth,
And milder seasons, which the unstain'd turf
I spread them on now offers in the face
Of the broad sun which ripen'd them, may seem
Good to thee, inasmuch as they have not
Suffer'd in limb or life, and rather form
A sample of thy works, than supplication
To look on ours! If a shrine without victim,
An altar without gore, may win thy favour,
Look on it! and for him who dresseth it,
He is—such as thou mad'st him; and seeks nothing
Which must be won by kneeling: if he's evil,
Strike him! thou art omnipotent, and may'st—
For what can he oppose? If he be good,
Strike him, or spare him, as thou wilt! since all
Rests upon thee; and good and evil seem
To have no power themselves, save in thy will;
And whether that be good or ill I know not,

Not being omnipotent, nor fit to judge
 Omnipotence, but merely to endure
 Its mandate ; which thus far I have endured.

[The fire upon the altar of ABEL kindles into a column of the brightest flame, and ascends to heaven ; while a whirlwind throws down the altar of CAIN, and scatters the fruits abroad upon the earth.]

Abel (kneeling). Oh, brother, pray ! Jehovah's wroth with thee.

Cain. Why so ?

Abel. Thy fruits are scatter'd on the earth.

Cain. From earth they came, to earth let them return ;
 Their seed will bear fresh fruit there ere the summer ;

Thy burnt flesh-offering prospers better ; see
 How heaven licks up the flames, when thick with blood !

Abel. Think not upon my offering's acceptance,
 But make another of thine own before
 It is too late.

Cain. I will build no more altars,
 Nor suffer any——

Abel (rising). Cain ! what meanest thou ?

Cain. To cast down yon vile flatt'rer of the clouds,
 The smoky harbinger of thy dull prayers—
 Thine altar, with its blood of lambs and kids,
 Which fed on milk, to be destroy'd in blood.

Abel (opposing him). Thou shalt not :—add not impious
 works to impious

Words ! let that altar stand—'t is hallow'd now
 By the immortal pleasure of Jehovah,
 In the acceptance of the victims.

Cain.

His !

His pleasure ! what was his high pleasure in
 The fumes of scorching flesh and smoking blood,
 To the pain of the bleating mothers, which
 Still yearn for their dead offspring ? or the pangs
 Of the sad ignorant victims underneath
 Thy pious knife ? Give way ! this bloody record
 Shall not stand in the sun, to shame creation !

Abel. Brother, give back ! thou shalt not touch my altar
 With violence : if that thou wilt adopt it,
 To try another sacrifice, 't is thine.

Cain. Another sacrifice ! Give way, or else
 That sacrifice may be——

Abel.

What mean'st thou?

Cain.

Give—

Give way!—thy God loves blood!—then look to it:—
Give way, ere he hath *more*!

Abel.

In *his* great name,
I stand between thee and the shrine which hath
Had his acceptance.

Cain.

If thou lov'st thyself,
Stand back till I have strew'd this turf along
Its native soil:—else——

Abel (opposing him). I love God far more
Than life.

*Cain (striking him with a brand, on the temples, which
he snatches from the altar).* Then take thy life unto
thy God,
Since he loves lives.

Abel (falls).

What hast thou done, my brother?

Cain. Brother!

Abel.

Oh, God! receive thy servant, and
Forgive his slayer, for he knew not what
He did—Cain, give me—give me thy hand; and tell
Poor Zillah—

Cain (after a moment's stupefaction). My hand! 't is all
red, and with——

What?

[*A long pause.—Looking slowly round.*

Where am I? alone! Where's Abel? where
Cain? Can it be that I am he? My brother,
Awake!—why liest thou so on the green earth?

'T is not the hour of slumber:—why so pale?

What, hast thou!—thou wert full of life this morn!

Abel! I pray thee, mock me not! I smote

Too fiercely, but not fatally. Ah, why

Wouldst thou oppose me? This is mockery;

And only done to daunt me:—'t was a blow—

And but a blow. Stir—stir—nay, only stir!

Why, so—that's well—thou breath'st! breathe upon me!

Oh, God! Oh, God!

Abel. (very faintly). What's he who speaks of God?

Cain. Thy murderer.

Abel. Then may God forgive him! Cain,
Comfort poor Zillah:—she has but one brother

Now.

[*ABEL dies.*

Cain. And I none!—Who makes me brotherless?

His eyes are open ! then he is not dead !
 Death is like sleep ; and sleep shuts down our lids.
 His lips, too, are apart ; why then he breathes ;
 And yet I feel it not.—His heart !—his heart !
 Let me see, doth it beat ? methinks——No !—no !
 This is a vision, else I am become
 The native of another and worse world.
 The earth swims round me :—what is this ?—'t is wet ;
 [Puts his hand to his brow, and then looks at it.]
 And yet there are no dews ! 'T is blood—my blood—
 My brother's and my own ! and shed by me !
 Then what have I further to do with life,
 Since I have taken life from my own flesh ?
 But he cannot be dead !—Is silence death ?
 No ; he will wake ; then let me watch by him.
 Life cannot be so slight, as to be quench'd
 Thus quickly !—he hath spoken to me since—
 What shall I say to him ?—My brother !—No :
 He will not answer to that name ; for brethren
 Smite not each other. Yet—yet—speak to me.
 Oh ! for a word more of that gentle voice,
 That I may bear to hear my own again !

Enter ZILLAH.

Zillah. I heard a heavy sound ; what can it be ?
 'T is Cain ; and watching by my husband. What
 Dost thou there, brother ? Doth he sleep ? Oh, heaven !
 What means this paleness, and yon stream ?—No, no !
 It is not blood ; for who would shed his blood ?
 Abel ! what's this ?—who hath done this ? He moves
 not ;
 He breathes not : and his hand drops down from mine
 With stony lifelessness ! Ah ! cruel Cain !
 Why cam'st thou not in time to save him from
 This violence ? Whatever hath assail'd him,
 Thou wert the stronger, and shouldst have stepp'd in
 Between him and aggression ! Father !—Eve !—
 Adah !—come hither ! Death is in the world !

[Exit ZILLAH, calling on her Parents, &c.]

Cain (solus). And who hath brought him there ?—I—
 who abhor
 The name of Death so deeply, that the thought
 Empoison'd all my life, before I knew

His aspect—I have led him here, and given
 My brother to his cold and still embrace,
 As if he would not have asserted his
 Inexorable claim without my aid.
 I am awake at last—a dreary dream
 Had madden'd me ; but *he* shall ne'er awake !

Enter ADAM, EVE, ADAH, and ZILLAH.

Adam. A voice of woe from Zillah brings me here.—
 What do I see ?—'T is true !—My son !—my son !
 Woman, behold the serpent's work, and thine !

[*To EVE.*

Eve. Oh ! speak not of it now : the serpent's fangs
 Are in my heart. My best beloved, Abel !
 Jehovah ! this is punishment beyond
 A mother's sin, to take *him* from me !

Adam. Who,
 Or what hath done this deed ?—speak, Cain, since thou
 Wert present ; was it some more hostile angel,
 Who walks not with Jehovah ? or some wild
 Brute of the forest ?

Eve. Ah ! a livid light
 Breaks through, as from a thunder-cloud ! yon brand
 Massy and bloody ! snatch'd from off the altar,
 And black with smoke, and red with——

Adam. Speak, my son !
 Speak, and assure us, wretched as we are,
 That we are not more miserable still.

Adah. Speak, Cain ! and say it was not *thou* !

Eve. It was.
 I see it now—he hangs his guilty head,
 And covers his ferocious eye with hands
 Incarnadine.

Adah. Mother, thou dost him wrong—
 Cain ! clear thee from this horrible accusal,
 Which grief wrings from our parent.

Eve. Hear, Jehovah !
 May the eternal serpent's curse be on him !
 For he was fitter for his seed than ours.
 May all his days be desolate ! May——

Adah. Hold !
 Curse him not, mother, for he is thy son—

Curse him not, mother, for he is my brother,
And my betroth'd.

Eve. He hath left thee no brother—
Zillah no husband—me *no son* ! for thus
I curse him from my sight for evermore !
All bonds I break between' us as he broke
That of his nature, in yon—Oh death ! death !
Why didst thou not take *me*, who first incurr'd thee ?
Why dost thou not so now ?

Adam. Eve ! let not this,
Thy natural grief, lead to impiety !
A heavy doom was long forespoken to us ;
And now that it begins, let it be borne
In such sort as may show our God that we
Are faithful servants to his holy will.

Eve (pointing to Cain). *His will !* the will of yon in-
carnate spirit
Of death, whom I have brought upon the earth
To strew it with the dead. May all the curses
Of life be on him ! and his agonies
Drive him forth o'er the wilderness, like us
From Eden, till his children do by him
As he did by his brother ! May the swords
And wings of fiery cherubim pursue him
By day and night—snakes spring up in his path—
Earth's fruits be ashes in his mouth—the leaves
On which he lays his head to sleep be strew'd
With scorpions ! May his dreams be of his victim !
His waking a continual dread of death !
May the clear rivers turn to blood as he
Stoops down to stain them with his raging lip !
May every element shun or change to him !
May he live in the pangs which others die with !
And death itself wax something worse than death
To him who first acquainted him with man !
Hence, fratricide ! henceforth that word is *Cain*,
Through all the coming myriads of mankind,
Who shall abhor thee, though thou wert their sire !
May the grass wither from thy feet ! the woods
Deny thee shelter ! earth a home ! the dust
A grave ! the sun his light ! and heaven her God !

[Exit EVE.]

Adam. Cain! get thee forth: we dwell no more together.
Depart! and leave the dead to me—I am
Henceforth alone—we never must meet more.

Adah. Oh, part not with him thus, my father: do not
Add thy deep curse to Eve's upon his head!

Adam. I curse him not: his spirit be his curse.
Come, Zillah!

Zillah. I must watch my husband's corse.

Adam. We will return again, when he is gone
Who hath provided for us this dread office.
Come, Zillah!

Zillah. Yet one kiss on yon pale clay,
And those lips once so warm—my heart! my heart!

[*Exeunt ADAM and ZILLAH, weeping.*]

Adah. Cain! thou hast heard, we must go forth. I am
ready,
So shall your children be. I will bear Enoch.
And you his sister. Ere the sun declines
Let us depart, nor walk the wilderness
Under the cloud of night.—Nay, speak to me.
To me—*thine own.*

Cain. Leave me!

Adah. Why, all have left thee.

Cain. And wherefore lingerest thou? Dost thou not fear
To dwell with one who hath done this?

Adah. I fear
Nothing except to leave thee, much as I
Shrink from the deed which leaves thee brotherless.
I must not speak of this—it is between thee
And the great God.

A Voice from within exclaims, Cain! Cain!

Adah. Hear'st thou that voice?

The Voice within. Cain! Cain!

Adah. It soundeth like an angel's tone.

Enter the ANGEL of the Lord.

Angel. Where is thy brother Abel?

Cain. Am I then
My brother's keeper?

Angel. Cain! what hast thou done?
The voice of thy slain brother's blood cries out,
Even from the ground, unto the Lord!—Now art thou
Cursed from the earth, which open'd late her mouth

To drink thy brother's blood from thy rash hand.
Henceforth, when thou shalt till the ground, it shall not
Yield thee her strength ; a fugitive shalt thou
Be from this day, and vagabond on earth !

Adah. This punishment is more than he can bear.
Behold, thou driv'st him from the face of earth,
And from the face of God shall he be hid.
A fugitive and vagabond on earth,
'T will come to pass, that whoso findeth him
Shall slay him.

Cain. Would they could ! but who are they
Shall slay me ? Where are these on the lone earth
As yet unpeopled ?

Angel. Thou hast slain thy brother,
And who shall warrant thee against thy son ?

Adah. Angel of Light ! be merciful, nor say
That this poor aching breast now nourishes
A murderer in my boy, and of his father.

Angel. Then he would but be what his father is.
Did not the milk of Eve give nutriment
To him thou now see'st so besmear'd with blood ?
The fratricide might well engender parricides.—
But it shall not be so—the Lord thy God
And mine commandeth me to set his seal
On Cain, so that he may go forth in safety.
Who slayeth Cain, a sevenfold vengeance shall
Be taken on his head. Come hither !

Cain. What
Wouldst thou with me ?

Angel. To mark upon thy brow
Exemption from such deeds as thou hast done.

Cain. No, let me die !

Angel. It must not be.

[*The ANGEL sets the mark on CAIN'S brow.*

Cain. It burns

My brow, but nought to that which is within it.
Is there more ? let me meet it as I may.

Angel. Stern hast thou been and stubborn from the womb,
As the ground thou must henceforth till ; but he
Thou slew'st was gentle as the flocks he tended.

Cain. After the fall too soon was I begotten ;
Ere yet my mother's mind subsided from
The serpent, and my sire still mourn'd for Eden.

That which I am, I am ; I did not seek
For life, nor did I make myself ; but could I
With my own death redeem him from the dust—
And why not so ? let him return to day,
And I lie ghastly ! so shall be restored
By God the life to him he loved ; and taken
From me a being I ne'er loved to bear.

Angel. Who shall heal murder ? what is done, is done ;
Go forth ! fulfil thy days ! and be thy deeds
Unlike the last ! *[The ANGEL disappears.]*

Adah. He's gone, let us go forth ;
I hear our little Enoch cry within
Our bower.

Cain. Ah ! little knows he what he weeps for !
And I who have shed blood cannot shed tears !
But the four rivers would not cleanse my soul.
Think'st thou my boy will bear to look on me ?

Adah. If I thought that he would not, I would——

Cain (interrupting her). No,
No more of threats : we've had too many of them :
Go to our children ; I will follow thee.

Adah. I will not leave thee lonely with the dead ;
Let us depart together.

Cain. Oh ! thou dead
And everlasting witness ! whose unsinking
Blood darkens earth and heaven ! what thou *now* art
I know not ! but if *thou* see'st what *I* am,
I think thou wilt forgive him, whom his God
Can ne'er forgive, nor his own soul.—Farewell !
I must not, dare not touch what I have made thee.
I, who sprung from the same womb with thee, drain'd
The same breast, clasp'd thee often to my own,
In fondness brotherly and boyish, I
Can never meet thee more, nor even dare
To do that for thee, which thou shouldst have done
For me—compose thy limbs into their grave—
The first grave yet dug for mortality.
But who hath dug that grave ? Oh, earth ! Oh, earth !
For all the fruits thou hast render'd to me, I
Give thee back this.—Now for the wilderness.

[ADAH stoops down and kisses the body of ABEL.]

Adah. A dreary and an early doom, my brother,
Has been thy lot ! Of all who mourn for thee,

I alone must not weep. My office is
Henceforth to dry up tears, and not to shed them ;
But yet of all who mourn, none mourn like me,
Not only for thyself, but him who slew thee.
Now, Cain ! I will divide thy burden with thee.

Cain. Eastward from Eden we will take our way ;
'T is the most desolate, and suits my steps.

Adah. Lead ! thou shalt be my guide, and may our
God

Be thine ! Now let us carry forth our children.

Cain. And *he* who lieth there was childless. I
Have dried the fountain of a gentle race,
Which might have graced his recent marriage couch,
And might have temper'd this stern blood of mine,
Uniting with our children Abel's offspring !

O Abel !

Adah. Peace be with him !

Cain.

But with *me* !——

[*Exeunt.*

HEAVEN AND EARTH:

A MYSTERY.

FOUNDED ON THE FOLLOWING PASSAGE IN GENESIS, CHAP. VI. : "AND IT CAME TO PASS . . . THAT THE SONS OF GOD SAW THE DAUGHTERS OF MEN THAT THEY WERE FAIR ; AND THEY TOOK THEM WIVES OF ALL WHICH THEY CHOSE."

"And woman wailing for her demon lover."—COLERIDGE.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

ANGELS.—SAMIASA.

AZAZIEL.

RAPHAEL, THE ARCH-
ANGEL.

MEN.—NOAH AND HIS SONS.

IRAD.

JAPHET.

WOMEN.—ANAH.

AHOLIBAMAH.

Chorus of Spirits of the Earth.—Chorus of Mortals.

PART I.

SCENE I.—*A woody and mountainous district near Mount Ararat.—Time, Midnight.*

Enter ANAH and AHOLIBAMAH.

Anah. OUR father sleeps ; it is the hour when they
Who love us are accustom'd to descend
Through the deep clouds o'er rocky Ararat :—
How my heart beats !

Aho. Let us proceed upon—
Our invocation.

Anah. But the stars are hidden.
I tremble.

Aho. So do I, but not with fear
Of aught save their delay.

Anah, My sister, though

I love Azazel more than—oh, too much !
 What was I going to say ? my heart grows impious.

Aho. And where is the impiety of loving
 Celestial natures ?

Anah. But, Aholibamah,
 I love our God less since his angel loved me :
 This cannot be of good ; and though I know not
 That I do wrong, I feel a thousand fears
 Which are not ominous of right.

Aho. Then wed thee
 Unto some son of clay, and toil and spin !
 There 's Japhet loves thee well, hath loved thee long :
 Marry, and bring forth dust !

Anah. I should have loved
 Azazel not less were he mortal ; yet
 I 'm glad he is not. I cannot outlive him.
 And when I think that his immortal wings
 Will one day hover o'er the sepulchre
 Of the poor child of clay which so adored him,
 As he adores the Highest, death becomes
 Less terrible ; but yet I pity him :
 His grief will be of ages, or at least
 Mine would be such for him, were I the seraph,
 And he the perishable.

Aho. Rather say,
 That he will single forth some other daughter
 Of earth, and love her as he once loved Anah.

Anah. And if it should be so, and she loved him,
 Better thus than that he should weep for me.

Aho. If I thought thus of Samiasa's love,
 All seraph as he is, I 'd spurn him from me.
 But to our invocation !—'T is the hour.

Anah. Seraph !

From thy sphere !
 Whatever star contain thy glory ;
 In the eternal depths of heaven
 Albeit thou watchest with " the seven,
 Though through space infinite and hoary
 Before thy bright wings worlds be driven,
 Yet hear !

Oh ! think of her who holds thee dear !
 And though she nothing is to thee,
 Yet think that thou art all to her.

Thou canst not tell,—and never be
Such pangs decreed to aught save me,—
The bitterness of tears.
Eternity is in thy years,
Unborn, undying beauty in thine eyes ;
With me thou canst not sympathise,
Except in love, and there thou must
Acknowledge that more loving dust
Ne'er wept beneath the skies.
Thou walk'st thy many worlds, thou see'st
The face of him who made thee great,
As he hath made me of the least
Of those cast out from Eden's gate ;
Yet, Seraph dear !
Oh hear !
For thou hast loved me, and I would not die
Until I know what I must die in knowing,
That thou forgett'st in thine eternity
Her whose heart death could not keep from o'er-
For thee, immortal essence as thou art ! [flowing
Great is their love who love in sin and fear ;
And such, I feel, are waging in my heart
A war unworthy : to an Adamite
Forgive, my Seraph ! that such thoughts appear,
For sorrow is our element ;
Delight
An Eden kept afar from sight,
Though sometimes with our visions blent.
The hour is near
Which tells me we are not abandon'd quite.—
Appear ! Appear !
Seraph !
My own Azazel ! be but here,
And leave the stars to their own light.
Aho. • Samiasa !
Wheresoe'er
Thou rulest in the upper air—
Or warring with the spirits who may dare
Dispute with him
Who made all empires, empire ; or recalling
Some wandering star, which shoots through the abyss,
Whose tenants dying, while their world is falling,
Share the dim destiny of clay in this ;

Or joining with the inferior cherubim,
 Thou deignest to partake their hymn—
 Samiasa!

I call thee, I await thee, and I love thee.
 Many may worship thee, that will I not :
 If that thy spirit down to mine may move thee,
 Descend and share my lot !
 Though I be form'd of clay,
 And thou of beams
 More bright than those of day
 On Eden's streams,
 Thine immortality cannot repay
 With love more warm than mine
 My love. There is a ray
 In me, which, though forbidden yet to shine,
 I feel was lighted at thy God's and thine.
 It may be hidden long : death and decay,
 Our mother Eve bequeath'd us—but my heart
 Defies it : though this life must pass away,
 Is *that* a cause for thee and me to part ?
 Thou art immortal—so am I : I feel—
 I feel my immortality o'ersweep
 All pains, all tears, all time, all fears, and peal,
 Like the eternal thunders of the deep,
 Into my ears this truth—"Thou liv'st for ever!"
 But if it be in joy
 I know not, nor would know ;
 That secret rests with the Almighty giver,
 Who folds in clouds the founts of bliss and woe.
 But thee and me he never can destroy ;
 Change us he may, but not o'erwhelm ; we are
 Of as eternal essence, and must war
 With him if he will war with us : with *thee*
 I can share all things, even immortal sorrow ;
 For thou hast ventured to share life with *me*,
 And shall I shrink from thine eternity? [through,
 No! though the serpent's sting should pierce me
 And thou thyself wert like the serpent, coil
 Around me still ! and I will smile,
 And curse thee not ; but hold
 Thee in as warm a fold
 As—— but descend, and prove
 A mortal's love

For an immortal. If the skies contain
More joy than thou canst give and take, remain!

Anah. Sister! sister! I view them winging
Their bright way through the parted night.

Aho. The clouds from off their pinions flinging,
As though they bore to-morrow's light.

Anah. But if our father see the sight!

Aho. He would but deem it was the moon
Rising unto some sorcerer's tune
An hour too soon.

Anah. They come! he comes!—Azaziel!

Aho.

Haste

To meet them! Oh! for wings to bear
My spirit, while they hover there,
To Samiasa's breast!

Anah. Lo! they have kindled all the west,
Like a returning sunset;—lo!

On Ararat's late secret crest
A mild and many-colour'd bow,
The remnant of their flashing path,
Now shines! and now, behold! it hath
Return'd to night, as rippling foam,
Which the leviathan hath lash'd
From his unfathomable home,
When sporting on the face of the calm deep,
Subsides soon after he again hath dash'd
Down, down, to where the ocean's fountains sleep.

Aho. They have touch'd earth! Samiasa!

Anah.

My Azaziel!

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

Enter IRAD and JAPHET.

Irak. Despond not: wherefore wilt thou wander thus
To add thy silence to the silent night,
And lift thy tearful eye unto the stars?
They cannot aid thee.

Japh. But they soothe me—now
Perhaps she looks upon them as I look.
Methinks a being that is beautiful
Becometh more so as it looks on beauty,

The eternal beauty of undying things.

Oh, Anah!

Irad. But she loves thee not.

Japh. Alas!

Irad. And proud Aholibamah spurns me also.

Japh. I feel for thee too!

Irad. Let her keep her pride,

Mine hath enabled me to bear her scorn;

It may be, time too will avenge it.

Japh. Canst thou

Find joy in such a thought?

Irad. Nor joy nor sorrow.

I loved her well; I would have loved her better,

Had love been met with love: as 't is, I leave her

To brighter destinies, if so she deems them.

Japh. What destinies?

Irad. I have some cause to think

She loves another.

Japh. Anah!

Irad. No; her sister.

Japh. What other?

Irad. That I know not; but her air,

If not her words, tells me she loves another.

Japh. Ay, but not Anah: she but loves her God.

Irad. Whate'er she loveth, so she loves thee not,

What can it profit thee?

Japh. True, nothing; but

I love.

Irad. And so did I.

Japh. And now thou lov'st not,

Or think'st thou lov'st not, art thou happier?

Irad. Yes.

Japh. I pity thee.

Irad. Me! why?

Japh. For being happy,

Deprived of that which makes my misery.

Irad. I take thy taunt as part of thy distemper,

And would not feel as thou dost for more shekels

Than all our father's herds would bring, if weigh'd

Against the metal of the sons of Cain—

The yellow dust they try to barter with us,

As if such useless and discolour'd trash,

The refuse of the earth, could be received

For milk, and wool, and flesh, and fruits, and all
Our flocks and wilderness afford.—Go, Japhet,
Sigh to the stars, as wolves howl to the moon—
I must back to my rest.

Japh. And so would I
If I could rest.

Irad. Thou wilt not to our tents then?

Japh. No, *Irad* ; I will to the cavern, whose
Mouth they say opens from the internal world,
To let the inner spirits of the earth
Forth when they walk its surface.

Irad. Wherefore so?
What wouldst thou there?

Japh. Soothe further my sad spirit
With gloom as sad : it is a hopeless spot,
And I am hopeless.

Irad. But 't is dangerous ;
Strange sounds and sights have peopled it with terrors.
I must go with thee.

Japh. *Irad*, no ; believe me
I feel no evil thought, and fear no evil.

Irad. But evil things will be thy foe the more
As not being of them : turn thy steps aside,
Or let mine be with thine.

Japh. No, neither, *Irad* ;
I must proceed alone.

Irad. Then peace be with thee !
[Exit *IRAD*.

Japh. (solus). Peace ! I have sought it where it should
be found,

In love—with love, too, which perhaps deserved it ;
And, in its stead, a heaviness of heart,
A weakness of the spirit, listless days,
And nights inexorable to sweet sleep,
Have come upon me. Peace ! what peace ? the calm
Of desolation, and the stillness of
The untrodden forest, only broken by
The sweeping tempest through its groaning boughs ;
Such is the sullen or the fitful state
Of my mind overworn. The earth's grown wicked,
And many signs and portents have proclaim'd
A change at hand, and an o'erwhelming doom
To perishable beings. Oh, my Anah !

When the dread hour denounced shall open wide
 The fountains of the deep, how mightest thou
 Have lain within this bosom, folded from
 The elements ; this bosom, which in vain
 Hath beat for thee, and then will beat more vainly,
 While thine—Oh, God ! at least remit to her
 Thy wrath ! for she is pure amidst the failing
 As a star in the clouds, which cannot quench,
 Although they obscure it for an hour. My Anah !
 How would I have adored thee, but thou wouldst not ;
 And still would I redeem thee—see thee live
 When ocean is earth's grave, and, unopposed
 By rock or shallow, the leviathan,
 Lord of the shoreless sea and watery world,
 Shall wonder at his boundlessness of realm.

[Exit JAPHET.]

Enter NOAH and SHEM.

Noah. Where is thy brother Japhet ?

Shem.

He went forth,

According to his wont, to meet with Irad,
 He said ; but, as I fear, to bend his steps
 Towards Anah's tents, round which he hovers nightly,
 Like a dove round and round its pillaged nest ;
 Or else he walks the wild up to the cavern
 Which opens to the heart of Ararat.

Noah. What doth he there ? It is an evil spot
 Upon an earth all evil ; for things worse
 Than even wicked men resort there : he
 Still loves this daughter of a fated race,
 Although he could not wed her if she loved him,
 And that she doth not. Oh, the unhappy hearts
 Of men ! that one of my blood, knowing well
 The destiny and evil of these days,
 And that the hour approacheth, should indulge
 In such forbidden yearnings ! Lead the way ;
 He must be sought for !

Shem.

Go not forward, father :

I will seek Japhet.

Noah.

Do not fear for me :

All evil things are powerless on the man
 Selected by Jehovah.—Let us on.

Shem. To the tents of the father of the sisters?

Noah. No ; to the cavern of the Caucasus.

[*Exeunt NOAH and SHEM.*]

SCENE III.

The mountains.—A cavern, and the rocks of Caucasus.

Japh. (solus). Ye wilds, that look eternal ; and thou cave,

Which seem'st unfathomable ; and ye mountains,
So varied and so terrible in beauty ;
Here, in your rugged majesty of rocks
And toppling trees that twine their roots with stone
In perpendicular places, where the foot
Of man would tremble, could he reach them—yes,
Ye look eternal ! Yet, in a few days,
Perhaps even hours, ye will be changed, rent, hurl'd
Before the mass of waters ; and yon cave,
Which seems to lead into a lower world,
Shall have its depths search'd by the sweeping wave,
And dolphins gambol in the lion's den !
And man—Oh, men ! my fellow-beings ! Who
Shall weep above your universal grave,
Save I ? Who shall be left to weep ? My kinsmen,
Alas ! what am I better than ye are,
That I must live beyond ye ? Where shall be
The pleasant places where I thought of Anah
While I had hope ? or the more savage haunts,
Scarce less beloved, where I despair'd for her ?
And can it be !—Shall yon exulting peak,
Whose glittering top is like a distant star,
Lie low beneath the boiling of the deep ?
No more to have the morning sun break forth,
And scatter back the mists in floating folds
From its tremendous brow ? no more to have
Day's broad orb drop behind its head at even,
Leaving it with a crown of many hues ?
No more to be the beacon of the world,
For angels to alight on, as the spot
Nearest the stars ? And can those words "*no more*"
Be meant for thee, for all things, save for us,
And the predestined creeping things reserved

By my sire to Jehovah's bidding? May
He preserve *them*, and *I* not have the power
 To snatch the loveliest of earth's daughters from
 A doom which even some serpent, with his mate,
 Shall 'scape to save his kind to be prolong'd,
 To hiss and sting through some emerging world,
 Reeking and dank from out the slime, whose ooze
 Shall slumber o'er the wreck of this, until
 The salt morass subside into a sphere
 Beneath the sun, and be the monument,
 The sole and undistinguish'd sepulchre,
 Of yet quick myriads of all life? How much
 Breath will be still'd at once! All-beauteous world!
 So young, so mark'd out for destruction, I
 With a cleft heart look on thee day by day,
 And night by night, thy number'd days and nights.
 I cannot save thee, cannot save even her
 Whose love had made me love thee more; but as
 A portion of thy dust, I cannot think
 Upon thy coming doom without a feeling
 Such as—Oh God! and canst thou— [*He pauses. A*
rushing sound from the cavern is heard, and shouts of
laughter—afterwards a Spirit passes.]

Japh. In the name
 Of the Most High, what art thou?

Spirit (laughs). Ha! ha! ha!

Japh. By all that earth holds holiest, speak!

Spirit (laughs). Ha! ha!

Japh. By the approaching deluge! by the earth
 Which will be strangled by the ocean! by
 The deep which will lay open all her fountains!
 The heaven which will convert her clouds to seas,
 And the Omnipotent who makes and crushes!
 Thou unknown, terrible, and indistinct,
 Yet awful Thing of Shadows, speak to me!
 Why dost thou laugh that horrid laugh?

Spirit. Why weep'st thou?

Japh. For earth and all her children.

Spirit. Ha! ha! ha!

[*Spirit vanishes.*]

Japh. How the fiend mocks the tortures of a world,
 The coming desolation of an orb,
 On which the sun shall rise and warm no life!

How the earth sleeps ! and all that in it is
Sleep too upon the very eve of death !
Why should they wake to meet it ? What are here,
Which look like death in life, and speak like things
Born ere this dying world ? They come like clouds !

[Various Spirits pass from the cavern.]

Spirit. Rejoice !

The abhorred race
Which could not sleep in Eden their high place,
But listen'd to the voice
Of knowledge without power,
Are nigh the hour
Of death !
Not slow, not single, not by sword, nor sorrow,
Nor years, nor heart-break, nor time's sapping motion,
Shall they drop off. Behold their last to-morrow !
Earth shall be ocean !

And no breath,

Save of the winds, be on the unbounded wave !
Angels shall tire their wings, but find no spot :
Not even a rock from out the liquid grave
Shall lift its point to save,
Or show the place where strong Despair hath died,
After long looking o'er the ocean wide
For the expected ebb which cometh not :
All shall be void,

Destroy'd !

Another element shall be the lord
Of life, and the abhorr'd
Children of dust be quench'd ; and of each hue
Of earth nought left but the unbroken blue ;
And of the variegated mountain
Shall nought remain
Unchanged, or of the level plain ;
Cedar and pine shall lift their tops in vain :
All merged within the universal fountain,
Man, earth, and fire, shall die,
And sea and sky

Look vast and lifeless in the eternal eye.

Upon the foam

Who shall erect a home ?

Japh. (coming forward). My sire !

Earth's seed shall not expire ;

Only the evil shall be put away
 From day.
 Avaunt ! ye exulting demons of the waste !
 Who howl your hideous joy
 When God destroys whom you dare not destroy ;
 Hence ! haste !
 Back to your inner caves !
 Until the waves
 Shall search you in your secret place,
 And drive your sullen race
 Forth, to be roll'd upon the tossing winds,
 In restless wretchedness along all space !
Spirit. Son of the saved !
 When thou and thine have braved
 The wide and warring element ;
 When the great barrier of the deep is rent,
 Shall thou and thine be good or happy ?—No !
 Thy new world and new race shall be of woe—
 Less goodly in their aspect, in their years
 Less than the glorious giants, who
 Yet walk the world in pride,
 The Sons of Heaven by many a mortal bride.
 Thine shall be nothing of the past, save tears.
 And art thou not ashamed
 Thus to survive,
 And eat, and drink, and wive ?
 With a base heart so far subdued and tamed,
 As even to hear this wide destruction named,
 Without such grief and courage, as should rather
 Bid thee await the world-dissolving wave,
 Than seek a shelter with thy favour'd father,
 And build thy city o'er the drown'd earth's grave ?
 Who would outlive their kind,
 Except the base and blind ?
 Mine
 Hateth thine
 As of a different order in the sphere,
 But not our own.
 There is not one who hath not left a throne
 Vacant in heaven to dwell in darkness here,
 Rather than see his mates endure alone.
 Go, wretch ! and give
 A life like thine to other wretches—live !

And when the annihilating waters roar
Above what they have done,
Envy the giant patriarchs then no more,
And scorn thy sire as the surviving one !
Thyself for being his son !

Chorus of Spirits issuing from the cavern.

Rejoice !

No more the human voice
Shall vex our joys in middle air
With prayer ;

No more
Shall they adore ;

And we, who ne'er for ages have adored
The prayer-exacting Lord,
To whom the omission of a sacrifice

Is vice ;

We, we shall view the deep's salt sources pour'd
Until one element shall do the work

Of all in chaos ; until they,

The creatures proud of their poor clay,
Shall perish, and their bleached bones shall lurk
In caves, in dens, in clefts of mountains, where
The deep shall follow to their latest lair ;
Where even the brutes, in their despair,
Shall cease to prey on man and on each other,

And the striped tiger shall lie down to die
Beside the lamb, as though he were his brother,

Till all things shall be as they were,

Silent and uncreated, save the sky :

While a brief truce

Is made with Death, who shall forbear

The little remnant of the past creation,

To generate new nations for his use ;

This remnant, floating o'er the undulation

Of the subsiding deluge, from its slime,

When the hot sun hath baked the reeking soil

Into a world, shall give again to Time

New beings—years, diseases, sorrow, crime—

With all companionship of hate and toil,

Until——

Japh. (interrupting them). The eternal will

Shall deign to expound this dream

Of good and evil ; and redeem

Unto himself all times, all things ;
 And, gather'd under his almighty wings,
 Abolish hell !

And to the expiated Earth
 Restore the beauty of her birth,
 Her Eden in an endless paradise,
 Where man no more can fall as once he fell,
 And even the very demons shall do well !

Spirits. And when shall take effect this wondrous spell ?

Japh. When the Redeemer cometh ; first in pain,
 And then in glory.

Spirit. Meantime still struggle in the mortal chain,
 Till earth wax hoary :

War with yourselves, and hell, and heaven, in vain,

Until the clouds look gory

With the blood reeking from each battle-plain ;

New times, new climes, new arts, new men ; but still

The same old tears, old crimes, and oldest ill,

Shall be amongst your race in different forms ;

But the same moral storms

Shall oversweep the future, as the waves

In a few hours the glorious giants' graves.

Chorus of Spirits.

Brethren, rejoice !

Mortal, farewell !

Hark ! hark ! already we can hear the voice

Of growing ocean's gloomy swell ;

The winds, too, plume their piercing wings ;

The clouds have nearly fill'd their springs ;

The fountains of the great deep shall be broken,

And heaven set wide her windows ; while mankind

View, unacknowledged, each tremendous token—

Still, as they were from the beginning, blind.

We hear the sound they cannot hear,

The mustering thunders of the threatening sphere ;

Yet a few hours their coming is delay'd ;

Their flashing banners, folded still on high,

Yet undisplay'd,

Save to the Spirit's all-pervading eye.

Howl ! howl ! oh Earth !

Thy death is nearer than thy recent birth ;

Tremble, ye mountains, soon to shrink below

The ocean's overflow !

The wave shall break upon your cliffs ; and shells,
The little shells, of ocean's least things be
Deposed where now the eagle's offspring dwells—
How shall he shriek o'er the remorseless sea !
And call his nestlings up with fruitless yell,
Unanswer'd, save by the encroaching swell ;—
While man shall long in vain for his broad wings,
The wings which could not save :—
Where could he rest them, while the whole space brings
Nought to his eye beyond the deep, his grave ?

Brethren, rejoice !

And loudly lift each superhuman voice—

All die,

Save the slight remnant of Seth's seed—

The seed of Seth,

Exempt for future sorrow's sake from death.

But of the sons of Cain

None shall remain ;

And all his goodly daughters

Must lie beneath the desolating waters ;

Or, floating upward, with their long hair laid

Along the wave, the cruel heaven upbraid,

Which would not spare

Beings even in death so fair.

It is decreed,

All die !

And to the universal human cry

The universal silence shall succeed !

Fly, brethren, fly !

But still rejoice !

We fell !

They fall !

So perish all

These petty foes of Heaven who shrink from hell !

[*The Spirits disappear, soaring upwards.*

Japh. (solus). God hath proclaim'd the destiny of earth ;
My father's ark of safety hath announced it ;
The very demons shriek it from their caves ;
The scroll of Enoch prophesied it long
In silent books, which, in their silence, say
More to the mind than thunder to the ear :
And yet men listen'd not, nor listen ; but
Walk darkling to their doom ; which, though so nigh,

Shakes them no more in their dim disbelief,
 Than their last cries shall shake the Almighty purpose,
 Or deaf obedient ocean, which fulfils it.
 No sign yet hangs its banner in the air ;
 The clouds are few, and of their wonted texture ;
 The sun will rise upon the earth's last day
 As on the fourth day of creation, when
 God said unto him, " Shine ! " and he broke forth
 Into the dawn, which lighted not the yet
 Unform'd forefather of mankind—but roused
 Before the human orison the earlier
 Made and far sweeter voices of the birds,
 Which in the open firmament of heaven
 Have wings like angels, and like them salute
 Heaven first each day before the Adamites :
 Their matins now draw nigh—the east is kindling—
 And they will sing ! and day will break ! Both near,
 So near the awful close ! For these must drop
 Their outworn pinions on the deep ; and day,
 After the bright course of a few brief morrows,—
 Ay, day will rise ; but upon what?—a chaos,
 Which was ere day ; and which, renew'd, makes time
 Nothing ! for, without life, what are the hours ?
 No more to dust than is eternity
 Unto Jehovah, who created both.
 Without him, even eternity would be
 A void : without man, time, as made for man,
 Dies with man, and is swallow'd in that deep
 Which has no fountain ; as his race will be
 Devour'd by that which drowns his infant world.—
 What have we here ? Shapes of both earth and air ?
 No—*all* of heaven, they are so beautiful.
 I cannot trace their features ; but their forms,
 How lovely they move along the side
 Of the grey mountain, scattering its mist !
 And after the swart savage spirits, whose
 Infernal immortality pour'd forth
 Their impious hymn of triumph, they shall be
 Welcome as Eden. It may be they come
 To tell me the reprieve of our young world,
 For which I have so often pray'd—They come !
 Anah ! oh, God ! and with her——

Enter SAMIASA, AZAZIEL, ANAH, and AHOLIBAMAH.

Anah.

Japhet!

Sam.

Lo!

A son of Adam!

Asa. What doth the earth-born here,
While all his race are slumbering?

Japh. Angel! what
Dost thou on earth when thou shouldst be on high?

Asa. Know'st thou not, or forgett'st thou, that a part
Of our great function is to guard thine earth?

Japh. But all good angels have forsaken earth,
Which is condemn'd; nay, even the evil fly
The approaching chaos. Anah! Anah! my
In vain, and long, and still to be, beloved!
Why walk'st thou with this spirit, in those hours
When no good spirit longer lights below?

Anah. Japhet, I cannot answer thee; yet, yet
Forgive me——

Japh. May the Heaven, which soon no more
Will pardon, do so! for thou art greatly tempted.

Aho. Back to thy tents, insulting son of Noah!
We know thee not.

Japh. The hour may come when thou
May'st know me better; and thy sister know
Me still the same which I have ever been.

Sam. Son of the patriarch, who hath ever been
Upright before his God, whate'er thy gifts,
And thy words seem of sorrow, mix'd with wrath,
How have Azazel, or myself, brought on thee
Wrong?

Japh. Wrong! the greatest of all wrongs; but thou
Say'st well; though she be dust, I did not, could not,
Deserve her. Farewell, Anah! I have said
That word so often! but now say it, ne'er
To be repeated. Angel! or whate'er
Thou art, or must be soon, hast thou the power
To save this beautiful—these beautiful
Children of Cain?

Asa.

From what?

Japh.

And is it so,

That ye too know not? Angels! angels! ye

Aho. And dost thou think that we,
 With Cain's, the eldest born of Adam's, blood
 Warm in our veins,—strong Cain! who was begotten
 In Paradise,—would mingle with Seth's children?
 Seth, the last offspring of old Adam's dotage?
 No; not to save all earth, were earth in peril!
 Our race hath always dwelt apart from thine
 From the beginning, and shall do so ever.

Japh. I did not speak to thee, Aholibamah!
 Too much of the forefather whom thou vauntest
 Has come down in that haughty blood which springs
 From him who shed the first, and that a brother's!
 But thou, my Anah! let me call thee mine,
 Albeit thou art not; 't is a word I cannot
 Part with, although I must from thee. My Anah!
 Thou who dost rather make me dream that Abel
 Had left a daughter, whose pure pious race
 Survived in thee, so much unlike thou art
 The rest of the stern Cainites, save in beauty,
 For all of them are fairest in their favour—

Aho. (interrupting him). And wouldst thou have her
 like our father's foe
 In mind, in soul? If I partook thy thought,
 And dream'd that aught of *Abel* was in *her*!—
 Get thee hence, son of Noah; thou makest strife.

Japh. Offspring of Cain, thy father did so!

Aho. But
 He slew not Seth: and what hast thou to do
 With other deeds between his God and him?

Japh. Thou speakest well: his God hath judged him,
 and
 I had not named his deed, but that thyself
 Didst seem to glory in him, nor to shrink
 From what he had done.

Aho. He was our fathers' father;
 The eldest born of man, the strongest, bravest,
 And most enduring:—Shall I blush for him
 From whom we had our being? Look upon
 Our race; behold their stature and their beauty,
 Their courage, strength, and length of days—

Japh. They're number'd.

Aho. Be it so! but while yet their hours endure,
 I glory in my brethren and our fathers.

Japh. My sire and race but glory in their God,
Anah! and thou?—

* *Anah.* Whatever our God decrees,
The God of Seth, as Cain, I must obey,
And will endeavour patiently to obey.
But could I dare to pray in this dread hour
Of universal vengeance (if such should be),
It would not be to live, alone exempt
Of all my house. My sister! oh, my sister!
What were the world, or other worlds, or all
The brightest future, without the sweet past—
Thy love, my father's, all the life, and all
The things which sprang up with me, like the stars,
Making my dim existence radiant with
Soft lights which were not mine? Aholibamah!
Oh! if there should be mercy—seek it, find it:
I abhor death, because that thou must die.

Aho. What, hath this dreamer, with his father's ark,
The bugbear he hath built to scare the world,
Shaken *my* sister? Are *we* not the loved
Of seraphs? and if we were not, must we
Cling to a son of Noah for our lives?
Rather than thus——But the enthusiast dreams
The worst of dreams, the fantasies engender'd
By hopeless love and heated vigils. Who
Shall shake these solid mountains, this firm earth,
And bid those clouds and waters take a shape
Distinct from that which we and all our sires
Have seen them wear on their eternal way?
Who shall do this?

Japh. He whose one word produced them.

Aho. Who *heard* that word?

Japh. The universe, which leap'd
To life before it. Ah! smilest thou still in scorn?
Turn to thy seraphs: if they attest it not,
They are none.

Sam. Aholibamah, own thy God!

Aho. I have ever hail'd our Maker, Samiasa,
As thine, and mine: a God of love, not sorrow.

Japh. Alas! what else is love but sorrow? Even
He who made earth in love had soon to grieve
Above its first and best inhabitants.

Aho. 'T is said so.

Japh. It is even so.

Enter NOAH and SHEM.

Noah. Japhet! What
Dost thou here with these children of the wicked?
Dread'st thou not to partake their coming doom?

Japh. Father, it cannot be a sin to seek
To save an earth-born being; and behold,
These are not of the sinful, since they have
The fellowship of angels.

Noah. These are they, then,
Who leave the throne of God, to take them wives
From out the race of Cain; the sons of heaven,
Who seek earth's daughters for their beauty?

Aza. Patriarch!
Thou hast said it.

Noah. Woe, woe, woe to such communion!
Has not God made a barrier between earth
And heaven, and limited each, kind to kind?

Sam. Was not man made in high Jehovah's image?
Did God not love what he had made? And what
Do we but imitate and emulate
His love unto created love?

Noah. I am
But man, and was not made to judge mankind,
Far less the sons of God; but as our God
Has deign'd to commune with me, and reveal
His judgments, I reply, that the descent
Of seraphs from their everlasting seat
Unto a perishable and perishing,
Even on the very *eve* of *perishing*, world,
Cannot be good.

Aza. What! though it were to save?

Noah. Not ye in all your glory can redeem
What he who made you glorious hath condemn'd.
Were your immortal mission safety, 't would
Be general, not for two, though beautiful;
And beautiful they are, but not the less
Condemn'd.

Japh. Oh, father! say it not.

Noah. Son! son!
If that thou wouldst avoid their doom, forget

That they exist : they soon shall cease to be,
While thou shalt be the sire of a new world,
And better.

Japh. Let me die with *this*, and *them* !

Noah. Thou *shouldst* for such a thought, but shalt not ; he
Who *can*, redeem thee.

Sam. And why him and thee,
More than what he, thy son, prefers to both ?

Noah. Ask him who made thee greater than myself
And mine, but not less subject to^d his own
Almightiness. And lo ! his mildest and
Least to be tempted messenger appears !

Enter RAPHAEL the Archangel.

Raph. Spirits !

Whose seat is near the throne,

What do ye here ?

Is thus a seraph's duty to be shown,

Now that the hour is near

When earth must be alone ?

Return !

Adore and burn,

In glorious homage with the elected "seven."

Your place is heaven.

Sam. Raphael !

The first and fairest of the sons of God,

How long hath this been law,

That earth by angels must be left untrod ?

Earth ! which oft saw

Jehovah's footsteps not disdain her sod !

The world he loved, and made

For love ; and oft have we obey'd

His frequent mission with delighted pinions :

Adoring him in his least works display'd :

Watching this youngest star of his dominions ;

And, as the latest birth of his great word,

Eager to keep it worthy of our Lord.

Why is thy brow severe ?

And wherefore speak'st thou of destruction near ?

Raph. Had Samiassa and Azaziel been

In their true place, with the angelic choir,

Written in fire

They would have seen

Jehovah's late decree,
And not inquired their Maker's breath of me :
But ignorance must ever be
A part of sin ;
And even the spirits' knowledge shall grow less
As they wax proud within
For Blindness is the first-born of Excess.
When all good angels left the world, ye stay'd,
Stung with strange passions, and debased
By mortal feelings for a mortal maid :
But ye are pardon'd thus far, and replaced
With your pure equals. Hence ! away ! away !
Or stay,

And lose eternity by that delay !
Aza. And thou ! if earth be thus forbidden
In the decree
To us until this moment hidden,
Dost thou not err as we
In being here ?

Raph. I came to call ye back to your fit sphere,
In the great name and at the word of God.
Dear, dearest in themselves, and scarce less dear
That which I came to do : till now we trod
Together the eternal space ; together
Let us still walk the stars. True, earth must die !
Her race, return'd into her womb, must wither,
And much which she inherits : but oh ! why
Cannot this earth be made, or be destroy'd,
Without involving ever some vast void
In the immortal ranks ? immortal still
In this immeasurable forfeiture.
Our brother Satan fell ; his burning will
Rather than longer worship dared endure !
But ye who still are pure !
Seraphs ! less mighty than that mightiest one,
Think how he was undone !
And think if tempting man can compensate
For heaven desired too late ?
Long have I warr'd,
Long must I war
With him who deem'd it hard
To be created, and to acknowledge him
Who midst the cherubim

Made him as suns to a dependent star,
Leaving the archangels at his right hand dim.

I loved him—beautiful he was : oh, heaven !
Save *his* who made, what beauty and what power
Was ever like to Satan's ! Would the hour

In which he fell could ever be forgiven !
The wish is impious : but, oh ye !

Yet undestroy'd, be warn'd ! Eternity

With him, or with his God, is in your choice :
He hath not tempted you ; he can not tempt
The angels, from his further snares exempt :

But man hath listen'd to his voice,
And ye to woman's—beautiful she is,
The serpent's voice less subtle than her kiss.
The snake but vanquish'd dust ; but she will draw
A second host from heaven, to break heaven's law.

Yet, yet, oh fly !

Ye cannot die ;

But they

Shall pass away,

While ye shall fill with shrieks the upper sky

For perishable clay,

Whose memory in your immortality

Shall long outlast the sun which gave them day.

Think how your essence differeth from theirs

In all but suffering ! why partake

The agony to which they must be heirs—

Born to be plough'd with years, and sown with cares,

And reap'd by Death, lord of the human soil ?

Even had their days been left to toil their path

Through time to dust, unshorten'd by God's wrath,

Still they are Evil's prey and Sorrow's spoil.

Aho. Let them fly !

I hear the voice which says that all must die,
Sooner than our white-bearded patriarchs died ;

And that on high

An ocean is prepared,

While from below

The deep shall rise to meet heaven's overflow.

Few shall be spared,

It seems ; and, of that few, the race of Cain

Must lift their eyes to Adam's God in vain.

Sister ! since it is so,

And the eternal Lord
In vain would be implored
For the remission of one hour of woe,
Let us resign even what we have adored,
And meet the wave, as we would meet the sword
If not unmoved, yet undismay'd,
And wailing less for us than those who shall
Survive in mortal or immortal thrall,
And, when the fatal waters are allay'd,
Weep for the myriads who can weep no more.
Fly, seraphs ! to your own eternal shore,
Where winds nor howl nor waters roar.

Our portion is to die,
And yours to live for ever :
But which is best, a dead eternity,
Or living, is but known to the great Giver.
Obey him, as we shall obey ;
I would not keep this life of mine in clay
An hour beyond his will ;
Nor see ye lose a portion of his grace,
For all the mercy which Seth's race
Find still.

Fly !
And as your pinions bear ye back to heaven,
Think that my love still mounts with thee on high,
Samiasa !
And if I look up with a tearless eye,
'T is that an angel's bride disdains to weep,—
Farewell ! Now rise, inexorable deep !

Anah. • And must we die ?
And must I lose thee too,
Azazel ?
Oh, my heart ! my heart !
Thy prophecies were true !
And yet thou wert so happy too !
The blow, though not unlook'd for, falls as new ;
But yet depart !

Ah ! why ?
Yet let me not retain thee—fly !
My pangs can be but brief: but thine would be
Eternal, if repulsed from heaven for me.
Too much already hast thou deign'd
To one of Adam's race !

Our doom is sorrow : not to us alone,
But to the spirits who have not disdain'd
To love us, cometh anguish with disgrace.
The first who taught us knowledge hath been hurl'd
From his once archangelic throne
Into some unknown world :

And thou, Azazel ! No—

Thou shalt not suffer woe

For me. Away ! nor weep !

Thou canst not weep ; but yet

May'st suffer more, not weeping : then forget
Her, whom the surges of the all-strangling deep
Can bring no pang like this. Fly ! fly !
Being gone, 't will be less difficult to die.

Japh. Oh, say not so !

Father ! and thou, archangel, thou !

Surely celestial mercy lurks below

That pure severe serenity of brow :

Let them not meet this sea without a shore,
Save in our ark, or let me be no more !

Noah. Peace, child of passion, peace !

If not within thy heart, yet with thy tongue

Do God no wrong !

Live as he wills it—die, when he ordains,

A righteous death, unlike the seed of Cain's.

Cease, or be sorrowful in silence ; cease
To weary Heaven's ear with thy selfish plaint.

Wouldst thou have God commit a sin for thee ?

Such would it be

To alter his intent

For a mere mortal sorrow. Be a man !

And bear what Adam's race must bear, and can.

Japh. Ay, father ! but when they are gone,

And we are all alone,

Floating upon the azure desert, and

The depth beneath us hides our own dear land,

And dearer, silent friends and brethren, all

Buried in its immeasurable breast,

Who, who, our tears, our shrieks, shall then command ?

Can we in desolation's peace have rest ?

Oh God ! be thou a God, and spare

Yet while 't is time ;

Renew not Adam's fall :

Mankind were then but twain,
But they are numerous now as are the waves
And the tremendous rain,
Whose drops shall be less thick than would their graves,
Were graves permitted to the seed of Cain.

Noah. Silence, vain boy! each word of thine's a crime,
Angel! forgive this stripling's fond despair.

Raph. Seraphs! these mortals speak in passion: Ye!
Who are, or should be, passionless and pure,
May now return with me.

Sam. It may not be:
We have chosen, and will endure.

Raph. Say'st thou?

Aza. He hath said it, and I say, Amen!

Raph. Again!

Then from this hour,
Shorn as ye are of all celestial power
And aliens from your God,
Farewell!

Japh. Alas! where shall they dwell?
Hark, hark! Deep sounds, and deeper still,
Are howling from the mountain's bosom:
'There's not a breath of wind upon the hill,
Yet quivers every leaf, and drops each blossom:
Earth groans as if beneath a heavy load.

Noah. Hark, hark! the sea-birds cry!
In clouds they overspread the lurid sky,
And hover round the mountain, where before
Never a white wing, wetted by the wave,
Yet dared to soar,
Even when the waters wax'd too fierce to brave.
Soon it shall be their only shore,
And then, no more!

Japh. The sun! the sun!
He riseth, but his better light is gone;
And a black circle, bound
His glaring disk around,
Proclaims earth's last of summer days hath shone!
The clouds return into the hues of night,
Save where their brazen-colour'd edges streak
The verge where brighter morns were wont to break.
Noah. And lo! yon flash of light,
The distant thunder's harbinger, appears!

It cometh ! hence, away !
 Leave to the elements their evil prey !
 Hence to where our all-hallow'd ark uprears
 Its safe and wreckless sides !

Japh. Oh, father, stay !
 Leave not my Anah to the swallowing tides !
Noah. Must we not leave all life to such ? Begone !
Japh. Not I.
Noah. Then die

With them !
 How darest thou look on that prophetic sky,
 And seek to save what all things now condemn,
 In overwhelming unison
 With just Jehovah's wrath !
Japh. Can rage and justice join in the same path ?
Noah. Blasphemer ! darest thou murmur even now !
Raph. Patriarch, be still a father ! smooth thy brow :
 Thy son, despite his folly, shall not sink :
 He knows not what he says, yet shall not drink
 With sobs the salt foam of the swelling waters :
 But be, when passion passeth, good as thou,
 Nor perish like heaven's children with man's daughters.
Aho. The tempest cometh ; heaven and earth unite
 For the annihilation of all life.
 Unequal is the strife

Between our strength and the Eternal Might !
Sam. But ours is with thee ; we will bear ye far
 To some untroubled star,
 Where thou and Anah shalt partake our lot :
 And if thou dost not weep for thy lost earth,
 Our forfeit heaven shall also be forgot .
Anah. Oh ! my dear father's tents, my place of birth,
 And mountains, land, and woods ! when ye are not,
 Who shall dry up my tears.

Aza. Thy spirit-lords
 Fear not ; though we are shut from heaven,
 Yet much is ours, whence we cannot be driven.
Raph. Rebel ! thy words are wicked, as thy deeds
 Shall henceforth be but weak : the flaming sword,
 Which chased the first-born out of Paradise,
 Still flashes in the angelic hands.

Aza. It cannot slay us : threaten dust with death,

And talk of weapons unto that which bleeds.
What are thy swords in our immortal eyes?

Raph. The moment cometh to approve thy strength;
And learn at length
How vain to war with what thy God commands:
Thy former force was in thy faith.

Enter Mortals, flying for refuge.

Chorus of Mortals.

The heavens and earth are mingling—God! oh God!
What have we done? Yet spare!

Hark! even the forest beasts howl forth their prayer!

The dragon crawls from out his den,
To herd, in terror, innocent with men;
And the birds scream their agony through air.
Yet, yet, Jehovah! yet withdraw thy rod
Of wrath, and pity thine own world's despair
Hear not man only but all nature plead!

Raph. Farewell, thou earth! ye wretched sons of clay,
I cannot, must not, aid you, 'T is decreed!

[*Exit RAPHAEL.*

Japh. Some clouds sweep on as vultures for their prey,
While others, fix'd as rocks, await the word
At which their wrathful vials shall be pour'd.
No azure more shall robe the firmament,

Nor spangled stars be glorious: Death hath risen:
In the sun's place a pale and ghastly glare
Hath wound itself around the dying air.

Asa. Come, Anah! quit this chaos-founded prison,
To which the elements again repair,
To turn it into what it was: beneath
The shelter of these wings thou shalt be safe,
As was the eagle's nestling once within
Its mother's.—Let the coming chaos chase
With all its elements! Heed not their din!
A brighter world than this, where thou shalt breathe
Ethereal life, will we explore:

These darken'd clouds are not the only skies.

[*AZAZIEL and SAMIASA fly off and disappear with ANAH
and AHOLIBAMAH.*

Japh. They are gone! They have disappear'd amidst
the roar
Of the forsaken world; and never more,

Whether they live, or die with all earth's life,
Now near its last, can aught restore
Anah unto these eyes.

Chorus of Mortals.

Oh son of Noah ! mercy on thy kind !
What ! wilt thou leave us all—all—*all* behind ?
While safe amidst the elemental strife,
Thou sitt'st within thy guarded ark ?

A Mother (offering her infant to JAPHET). Oh let this
child embark !

I brought him forth in woe,

But thought it joy

To see him to my bosom clinging so

Why was he born ?

What hath he done—

My unwean'd son—

To move Jehovah's wrath or scorn ?

What is there in this milk of mine, that death

Should stir all heaven and earth up to destroy

My boy,

And roll the waters o'er his placid breath ?

Save him, thou seed of Seth !

Or cursed be—with him who made

Thee and thy race, for which we are betray'd !

Japh. Peace ! 't is no hour for curses, but for prayer !

Chorus of Mortals.

For prayer ! ! !

And where

Shall prayer ascend,

When the swoln clouds unto the mountains bend

And burst,

And gushing oceans every barrier rend,

Until the very deserts know no thirst ?

Accursed !

Be he who made thee and thy sire !

We deem our curses vain ; we must expire ;

But as we know the worst,

Why should our hymn be raised, our knees be bent

Before the implacable Omnipotent,

Since we must fall the same ?

If he hath made earth, let it be his shame,

To make a world for torture.—Io! they come,
The loathsome waters, in their rage!
And with their roar make wholesome nature dumb!
The forests' trees (coeval with the hour
When Paradise upsprung,
Ere Eve gave Adam knowledge for her dower,
Or Adam his first hymn of slavery sung),
So massy, vast, yet green in their old age,
Are overtopp'd,
Their summer blossoms by the surges lopp'd,
Which rise, and rise, and rise.
Vainly we look up to the lowering skies—
They meet the seas,
And shut out God from our beseeching eyes.
Fly, son of Noah, fly! and take thine ease,
In thine allotted ocean-tent;
And view, all floating o'er the element,
The corpses of the world of thy young days:
Then to Jehovah raise
Thy song of praise!

A Mortal. Blessed are the dead
Who die in the Lord!
And though the waters be o'er earth outspread,
Yet, as *his* word,
Be the decree adored!
He gave me life—he taketh but
The breath which is his own:
And though these eyes should be for ever shut,
No longer, this weak voice before his throne
Be heard in supplicating tone,
Still blessed be the Lord,
For what is past,
For that which is:
For all are his,
From first to last—
Time, space, eternity, life, death—
The vast known and immeasurable unknown.
He made, and can unmake:
And shall *I*, for a little gasp of breath,
Blasphe^me and groan?
No; let me die, as I have lived, in faith,
Nor quiver, though the universe may quake!

Chorus of Mortals.

Where shall we fly?
 Not to the mountains high;
 For now their torrents rush, with double roar,
 To meet the ocean, which, advancing still,
 Already grasps each drowning hill,
 Nor leaves an unsearch'd cave.

Enter a Woman,

Woman. Oh, save me, save!
 Our valley is no more:
 My father and my father's tent,
 My brethren and my brethren's herds,
 The pleasant trees that o'er our noonday bent,
 And sent forth evening songs from sweetest birds,
 The little rivulet which freshen'd all
 Our pastures green,
 No more are to be seen.
 When to the mountain cliff I climb'd this morn,
 I turn'd to bless the spot,
 And not a leaf appear'd about to fall;—
 And now they are not!
 Why was I born?
Japh. To die! in youth to die!
 And happier in that doom,
 Than to behold the universal tomb,
 Which I
 Am thus condemn'd to weep above in vain.
 Why, when all perish, why must I remain?

[*The waters rise; Men fly in every direction; many are overtaken by the waves; the Chorus of Mortals disperses in search of safety up the mountains: Japhet remains upon a rock, while the Ark floats towards him in the distance.*

WERNER; OR, THE INHERITANCE:
A TRAGEDY.

TO
THE ILLUSTRIOUS GOETHE,
BY ONE OF HIS HUMBLEST ADMIRERS, THIS TRAGEDY IS DEDICATED.

PREFACE.

THE following drama is taken entirely from the "German's Tale, Krutzner," published many years ago in "Lee's Canterbury Tales," written (I believe) by two sisters, of whom one furnished only this story and another, both of which are considered superior to the remainder of the collection. I have adopted the characters, plan, and even the language of many parts of this story. Some of the characters are modified or altered, a few of the names changed, and one character (Ida of Stralenheim) added by myself: but in the rest the original is chiefly followed. When I was young (about fourteen, I think), I first read this tale, which made a deep impression upon me; and may, indeed, be said to contain the germ of much that I have since written. I am not sure that it ever was very popular; or, at any rate, its popularity has since been eclipsed by that of other great writers in the same department. But I have generally found that those who *had* read it, agreed with me in their estimate of the singular power of mind and conception which it develops. I should also add *conception*, rather than execution; for the story might, perhaps, have been developed with greater advantage. Amongst those whose opinions agreed with mine upon this story, I could mention some very high names: but it is not necessary, nor indeed of any use; for every one must judge according to his own feelings. I merely refer the reader to the original story, that he may see to what

extent I have borrowed from it; and am not unwilling that he should find much greater pleasure in perusing it than the drama which is founded upon its contents.

I had begun a drama upon this tale so far back as 1815 (the first I ever attempted, except once at thirteen years old, called "Ulric and Ilvina," which I had sense enough to burn), and had nearly completed an act, when I was interrupted by circumstances. This is somewhere amongst my papers in England; but as it has not been found, I have re-written the first, and added the subsequent acts.

The whole is neither intended, nor in any shape adapted, for the stage.

PISA, *February*, 1822.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.—WERNER.

ULRIC.

STRALLENHEIM.

IDENSTEIN.

GABOR.

FRITZ

HENRICK.

ERIC.

ARNHEIM.

MEISTER.

RODOLPH.

LUDWIG.

WOMEN.—JOSEPHINE.

IDA STRALLENHEIM.

SCENE.—Partly on the frontier of Silesia, and partly in Siegendorf Castle, near Prague.

TIME.—*The Close of the Thirty Years' War.*

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*The Hall of a decayed Palace near a small Town on the Northern Frontier of Silesia—the Night tempestuous.*

WERNER and JOSEPHINE, his Wife.

Jos. My love, be calmer!

Wer.

I am calm.

Jos.

To me—

Yes, but not to thyself: thy pace is hurried,
And no one walks a chamber like to ours
With steps like thine when his heart is at rest.
Were it a garden, I should deem thee happy,

And stepping with the bee from flower to flower;
But *here!*—

Wer. 'T is chill; the tapestry lets through
The wind to which it waves: my blood is frozen.

Jos. Ah, no!

Wer. (smiling). Why! wouldst thou have it so;

Jos. I would
Have it a healthful current.

Wer. Let it flow
Until 't is spilt or check'd—how soon, I care not.

Jos. And am I nothing in thy heart?

Wer. All—all.

Jos. Then canst thou wish for that which must break
mine?

Wer. (approaching her slowly). But for *thee* I had been
—no matter what,

But much of good and evil; what I am,
Thou knowest; what I might or should have been,
Thou knowest not: but still I love thee, nor
Shall aught divide us.

[*WERNER walks on abruptly, and then approaches* JOSEPHINE.

The storm of the night
Perhaps affects me; I'm a thing of feelings,
And have of late been sickly, as, alas!
Thou know'st by sufferings more than mine, my love!
In watching me.

Jos. To see thee well is much—
To see thee happy—

Wer. Where hast thou seen such?
Let me be wretched with the rest!

Jos. But think
How many in this hour of tempest shiver
Beneath the biting wind and heavy rain,
Whose every drop bows them down nearer earth,
Which hath no chamber for them save beneath
Her surface.

Wer. And that's not the worst: who cares
For chambers? rest is all. The wretches whom
Thou namest—ay, the wind howls round them, and
The dull and dropping rain saps in their bones
The creeping marrow. I have been a soldier,
A hunter, and a traveller, and am
A beggar, and should know the thing thou talk'st of.

Jos. And art thou not now shelter'd from them all?

Wer. Yes. And from these alone.

Jos. And that is something.

Wer. True—to a peasant.

Jos. Should the nobly born

Be thankless for that refuge which their habits

Of early delicacy render more

Needful than to the peasant, when the ebb

Of fortune leaves them on the shoals of life?

Wer. It is not that, thou know'st it is not: we

Have borne all this, I'll not say patiently,

Except in thee—but we have borne it.

Jos. Well?

Wer. Something beyond our outward sufferings (though
These were enough to gnaw into our souls)

Hath stung me oft, and, more than ever, *now*.

When, but for this untoward sickness, which

Seized me upon this desolate frontier, and

Hath wasted, not alone my strength, but means,

And leaves us—no! this is beyond me!—but

For this I had been happy—*thou* been happy—

The splendour of my rank sustain'd—my name—

My father's name—been still upheld; and, more

Than those—

Jos. (abruptly). My son—our son—our Ulric,

Been clasp'd again in these long-empty arms,

And all a mother's hunger satisfied.

Twelve years! he was but eight then:—beautiful

He was, and beautiful he must be now,

My Ulric! my adored!

Wer. I have been full oft

The chase of Fortune; now she hath o'ertaken

My spirit where it cannot turn at bay,—

Sick, poor, and lonely.

Jos. Lonely! my dear husband!

Wer. Or worse—involving all I love in this

Far worse than solitude. *Alone*, I had died,

And all been over in a nameless grave.

Jos. And I had not outlived thee; but pray take

Comfort! We have struggled long; and they who strive

With Fortune win or weary her at last,

So that they find the goal or cease to feel

Further. Take comfort,—we shall find our boy.

Wer. We were in sight of him, of everything
Which could bring compensation for past sorrow—
And to be baffled thus!

Jos. We are not baffled.

Wer. Are we not penniless?

Jos. We ne'er were wealthy.

Wer. But I was born to wealth, and rank, and power;
Enjoy'd them, loved them, and, alas! abused them,
And forfeited them by my father's wrath,
In my o'er-fervent youth: but for the abuse
Long sufferings have atoned. My father's death
Left the path open, yet not without snares.
This cold and creeping kinsman, who so long
Kept his eye on me, as the snake upon
The fluttering bird, hath ere this time outstept me,
Become the master of my rights, and lord
Of that which lifts him up to princes in
Dominion and domain.

Jos. Who knows? our son
May have return'd back to his grandsire, and
Even now uphold thy rights for thee?

Wer. 'T is hopeless.
Since his strange disappearance from my father's,
Entailing, as it were, my sins upon
Himself, no tidings have reveal'd his course.
I parted with him to his grandsire, on
The promise that his anger would stop short
Of the third generation; but Heaven seems
To claim her stern prerogative, and visit
Upon my boy his father's faults and follies.

Jos. I must hope better still,—at least we have yet
Baffled the long pursuit of Stralenheim.

Wer. We should have done, but for this fatal sickness;
More fatal than a mortal malady,
Because it takes not life, but life's sole solace:
Even now I feel my spirit girt about
By the snares of this avaricious fiend:—
How do I know he hath not track'd us here?

Jos. He does not know thy person; and his spies,
Who so long watch'd thee, have been left at Hamburg.
Our unexpected journey, and this change
Of name, leaves all discovery far behind:
None hold us here for aught save what we seem.

Wer. Save what we seem! save what we *are*—sick
 beggars,
 Even to our very hopes—Ha! ha!

Jos. Alas!
 That bitter laugh!

Wer. *Who* would read in this form
 The high soul of the son of a long line?

Who, in this garb, the heir of princely lands?

Who, in this sunken, sickly eye, the pride
 Of rank and ancestry? In this frown check
 And famine-hollow'd brow, the lord of halls
 Which daily feast a thousand vassals?

Jos. You
 Ponder'd not thus upon these worldly things,
 My Werner! when you deign'd to choose for bride
 The foreign daughter of a wandering exile.

Wer. An exile's daughter with an outcast son,
 Were a fit marriage: but I still had hopes
 To lift thee to the state we both were born for.
 Your father's house was noble, though decay'd;
 And worthy by its birth to match with ours.

Jos. Your father did not think so, though 't was noble;
 But had my birth been all my claim to match
 With thee, I should have deem'd it what it is.

Wer. And what is that in thine eyes?

Jos. All which it
 Has done in our behalf,—nothing.

Wer. How,—nothing?

Jos. Or worse; for it has been a canker in
 Thy heart from the beginning: but for this,
 We had not felt our poverty but as
 Millions of myriads feel it, cheerfully;
 But for these phantoms of thy feudal fathers,
 Thou might'st have earn'd thy bread, as thousands earn it;
 Or, if that seem too humble, tried by commerce,
 Or other civic means, to amend thy fortunes.

Wer. (*ironically*). And been an Hanseatic burgher?
 Excellent!

Jos. Whate'er thou might'st have been, to me thou art
 What no state high or low can ever change,
 My heart's first choice;—which chose thee, knowing
 neither
 Thy birth, thy hopes, thy pride; nought, save thy sorrows:

While they last, let me comfort or divide them :
When they end, let mine end with them, or thee !

Wer. My better angel ! Such I have ever found thee ;
This rashness, or this weakness of my temper,
Ne'er raised a thought to injure thee or thine.
Thou didst not mar my fortunes : my own nature
In youth was such as to unmake an empire,
Had such been my inheritance ; but now,
Chasten'd, subdued, out-worn, and taught to know
Myself,—to lose this for our son and thee !
Trust me, when, in my two-and-twentieth spring,
My father barr'd me from my fathers' house,
The last sole scion of a thousand sires
(For I was then the last), it hurt me less
Than to behold my boy and my boy's mother
Excluded in their innocence from what
My faults deserved—exclusion ; although then
My passions were all living serpents, and
Twined like the Gorgon's round me.

[*A loud knocking is heard.*

Jos.

Hark !

Wer.

A knocking !

Jos. Who can it be at this lone hour ? We have
Few visitors.

Wer. And poverty hath none,
Save those who come to make it poorer still.
Well, I'm prepared.

[*WERNER puts his hand into his bosom, as if to search
for some weapon.*

Jos.

Oh ! do not look so. I
Will to the door. It cannot be of import
In this lone spot of wintry desolation :—
The very desert saves man from mankind.

[*She goes to the door.*

Enter IDENSTEIN.

Iden. A fair good evening to my fairer hostess
And worthy—What's your name, my friend ?

Wer.

Are you

Not afraid to demand it ?

Iden.

Not afraid ?

Egad ! I am afraid. You look as if

I ask'd for something better than your name,
By the face you put on it.

Wer. Better, sir!

Iden. Better or worse, like matrimony: what
Shall I say more? You have been a guest this month
Here in the prince's palace—(to be sure,
His highness had resign'd it to the ghosts
And rats these twelve years—but 't is still a palace)—
I say you have been our lodger, and as yet
We do not know your name.

Wer. My name is Werner.

Iden. A goodly name, a very worthy name,
As e'er was gilt upon a trader's board:
I have a cousin in the lazaretto
Of Hamburgh, who has got a wife who bore
The same. He is an officer of trust,
Surgeon's assistant (hoping to be surgeon),
And has done miracles i' the way of business.
Perhaps you are related to my relative?

Wer. To yours?

Jos. Oh, yes; we are, but distantly.
(*Aside to WERNER*). Cannot you humour the dull gossip till
We learn his purpose?

Iden. Well, I'm glad of that;
I thought so all along, such natural yearnings
Play'd round my heart:—blood is not water, cousin;
And so let's have some wine, and drink unto
Our better acquaintance: relatives should be
Friends.

Wer. You appear to have drank enough already;
And if you have not, I've no wine to offer,
Else it were yours: but this you know, or should know:
You see I am poor, and sick, and will not see
That I would be alone; but to your business!
What brings you here?

Iden. Why, what should bring me here?

Wer. I know not, though I think that I could guess
That which will send you hence.

Jos. (aside). Patience, dear Werner!

Iden. You don't know what has happen'd, then?

Jos. How should we?

Iden. The river has o'erflow'd.

Jos. Alas! we have known
That to our sorrow for these five days; since
It keeps us here.

Iden. But what you do n't know is,
That a great personage, who fain would cross
Against the stream and three postilions' wishes,
Is drown'd below the ford, with five post-horses,
A monkey, and a mastiff, and a valet.

Jos. Poor creatures! are you sure?

Iden. Yes, of the monkey,
And the valet, and the cattle; but as yet
We know not if his excellency's dead
Or no; your noblemen are hard to drown,
As it is fit that men in office should be;
But what is certain is, that he has swallow'd
Enough of the Oder to have burst two peasants;
And now a Saxon and Hungarian traveller,
Who, at their proper peril, snatch'd him from
The whirling river, have sent on to crave
A lodging, or a grave, according as
It may turn out with the live or dead body.

Jos. And where will you receive him? here, I hope,
If we can be of service—say the word.

Iden. Here? no; but in the prince's own apartment,
As fits a noble guest:—'t is damp, no doubt,
Not having been inhabited these twelve years;
But then he comes from a much damper place,
So scarcely will catch cold in 't, if he be
Still liable to cold—and if not, why
He'll be worse lodged to-morrow: ne'ertheless
I have order'd fire and all appliances
To be got ready for the worst—that is,
In case he should survive.

Jos. Poor gentleman,
I hope he will, with all my heart.

W'er. Intendant,
Have you not learn'd his name? My Josephine,
Retire: I'll sift this fool. *[Aside to his wife. Exit JOSEPHINE.*

Iden. His name? oh Lord!
Who knows if he hath now a name or no?
'T is time enough to ask it when he's able

To give an answer ; or if not, to put
His heir's upon his epitaph. Methought
Just now you chid me for demanding names?

Wer. True, true, I did so : you say well and wisely.

Enter GABOR.

Gab. If I intrude, I crave——

Iden. Oh, no intrusion !

This is the palace ; this a stranger like
Yourself ; I pray you make yourself at home :
But where 's his excellency ? and how fares he ?

Gab. Wetly and wearily, but out of peril :
He paused to change his garments in a cottage
(Where I doff'd mine for these, and came on hither),
And has almost recover'd from his drenching.
He will be here anon.

Iden. What ho, there ! bustle !
Without there, Herman, Weiliburg, Peter, Conrad !

[Gives directions to different servants who enter.]

A nobleman sleeps here to-night—see that
All is in order in the damask chamber—
Keep up the stove—I will myself to the cellar—
And Madame Idenstein (my consort, stranger)
Shall furnish forth the bed-apparel ; for,
To say the truth, they are marvellous scant of this
Within the palace precincts, since his highness
Left it some dozen years ago. And then
His excellency will sup, doubtless ?

Gab. Faith !
I cannot tell ; but I should think the pillow
Would please him better than the table, after
His soaking in your river : but for fear
Your viands should be thrown away, I mean
To sup myself, and have a friend without
Who will do honour to your good cheer with
A traveller's appetite.

Iden. But are you sure
His excellency——But his name : what is it ?

Gab. I do not know.

Iden. And yet you saved his life.

Gab. I help'd my friend to do so.

Iden. Well, that's strange,
To save a man's life whom you do not know.

Gab. Not so ; for there are some I know so well,
I scarce should give myself the trouble.

Iden. Pray,
Good friend, and who may you be ?

Gab. By my family,
Hungarian.

Iden. Which is call'd ?

Gab. It matters little.

Iden. (aside). I think that all the world are grown
anonymous,

Since no one cares to tell me what he's call'd !

Pray, has his excellency a large suite ?

Gab. Sufficient.

Iden. How many ?

Gab. I did not count them.
We came up by mere accident, and just

In time to drag him through his carriage window.

Iden. Well, what would I give to save a great man !
No doubt you'll have a swingeing sum as recompense.

Gab. Perhaps.

Iden. Now, how much do you reckon on ?

Gab. I have not yet put up myself to sale :

In the mean time, my best reward would be

A glass of your Hockheimer—a *green* glass,

Wreath'd with rich grapes and Bacchanal devices,

O'erflowing with the oldest of your vintage :

For which I promise you, in case you e'er

Run hazard of being drown'd (although I own

It seems, of all deaths, the least likely for you),

I'll pull you out for nothing. Quick, my friend,

And think, for every bumper I shall quaff,

A wave the less may roll above your head.

Iden. (aside). I don't much like this fellow—close and
dry

He seems,—two things which suit me not ; however,

Wine he shall have ; if that unlock him not,

I shall not sleep to-night for curiosity. [*Exit IDENSTEIN.*]

Gab. (to WERNER). This master of the ceremonies is

The intendant of the palace, I presume ;

'Tis a fine building, but decay'd.

Wer. The apartment
Design'd for him you rescued will be found
In fitter order for a sickly guest.

Gab. I wonder then you occupied it not,
For you seem delicate in health.

Wer. (*quickly*). Sir!

Gab. Pray
Excuse me; have I said aught to offend you?

Wer. Nothing: but we are strangers to each other.

Gab. And that's the reason I would have us less so:
I thought our bustling host without had said
You were a chance and passing guest, the counterpart
Of me and my companions.

Wer. Very true.

Gab. Then, as we never met before, and never,
It may be, may again encounter, why,
I thought to cheer up this old dungeon here
(At least to me) by asking you to share
The fare of my companions and myself.

Wer. Pray, pardon me; my health—

Gab. Even as you please.
I've been a soldier, and perhaps am blunt
In bearing.

Wer. I've also served, and can
Requite a soldier's greeting.

Gab. In what service?
The Imperial?

Wer. (*quickly, and then interrupting himself*). I com-
manded—no—I mean
I served; but it is many years ago,
When first Bohemia raised her banner 'gainst
The Austrian.

Gab. Well, that's over now, and peace
Has turn'd some thousand gallant hearts adrift
To live as they best may: and, to say truth,
Some take the shortest.

Wer. What is that?

Gab. What'e'er
They lay their hands on. All Silesia and
Lusatia's woods are tenanted by bands
(Of the late troops, who levy on the country
Their maintenance: the Chatelains must keep
Their castle walls—beyond them 't is but doubtful
Travel for your rich count or full-blown baron.
My comfort is that, wander where I may,
I've little left to lose now.

Wer. And I—nothing.

Gab. That's harder still. You say you were a soldier.

Wer. I was."

Gab. You look one still. All soldiers are
Or should be comrades, even though enemies.
Our swords when drawn must cross, our engines aim
(While levell'd) at each other's hearts; but when
A truce, a peace, or what you will, remits
The steel into its scabbard, and lets sleep
The spark which lights the matchlock, we are brethren.
You're poor and sickly—I'm not rich, but healthy;
I want for nothing which I cannot want;
You seem devoid of this—wilt share it?

[*GABOR pulls out his purse.*

Wer.

Who

Told you I was a beggar?

Gab. You yourself,

In saying you were a soldier during peace-time.

Wer. (*looking at him with suspicion*). You know me
not?

Gab. I know no man, not even
Myself: how should I then know one I ne'er
Beheld till half an hour since?

Wer.

Sir, I thank you.

Your offer's noble were it to a friend,
And not unkind as to an unknown stranger,
Though scarcely prudent; but no less I thank you.
I am a beggar in all save his trade;
And when I beg of any one, it shall be
Of him who was the first to offer what
Few can obtain by asking. Pardon me. [*Exit WERNER.*

Gab. (*solus*). A goodly fellow by his looks, though worn,
As most good fellows are, by pain or pleasure,
Which tear life out of us before our time;
I scarce know which most quickly: but he seems
To have seen better days, as who has not
Who has seen yesterday?—But here approaches
Our sage intendant, with the wine: however,
For the cup's sake I'll bear the cupbearer.

Enter IDENSTEIN.

Iden. 'Tis here! the supernaculum! twenty years
Of age, if 't is a day.

Gab. Which epoch makes
Young women and old wine ; and 't is great pity,
Of two such excellent things, increase of years,
Which still improves the one, should spoil the other.
Fill full—Here 's to our hostess !—your fair wife !

[*Takes the glass.*

Iden. Fair !—Well, I trust your taste in wine is equal
To that you show for beauty ; but I pledge you
Nevertheless.

Gab. Is not the lovely woman
I met in the adjacent hall, who, with
An air, and port, and eye, which would have better
Beseem'd this palace in its brightest days
(Though in a garb adapted to its present
Abandonment), return'd my salutation—
Is not the same your spouse ?

Iden. I would she were !
But you 're mistaken :—that 's the stranger's wife.

Gab. And by her aspect she might be a prince's ;
Though time hath touch'd her too, she still retains
Much beauty, and more majesty.

Iden. And that
Is more than I can say for Madame Idenstein,
At least in beauty : as for majesty,
She has some of its properties which might
Be spared—but never mind !

Gab. I don't. But who
May be this stranger ? He too hath a bearing
Above his outward fortunes.

Iden. There I differ.
He's poor as Job, and not so patient ; but
Who he may be, or what, or aught of him,
Except his name (and that I only learn'd
To-night), I know not.

Gab. But how came he here ?

Iden. In a most miserable old caleche,
About a month since, and immediately
Fell sick, almost to death. He should have died.

Gab. Tender and true ! but why ?

Iden. Why, what is life
Without a living ? He has not a stiver.

Gab. In that case, I much wonder that a person

Of your apparent prudence should admit
Guests so forlorn into this noble mansion.

Iden. That 's true : but pity, as you know, *does* make
One's heart commit these follies ; and besides,
They had some valuables left at that time,
Which paid their way up to the present hour ;
And so I thought they might as well be lodged
Here as at the small tavern, and I gave them
The run of some of the oldest palace rooms.
They served to air them, at the least as long
As they could pay^{for} firewood.

Gab. Poor souls !

Iden. Exceeding poor. Ay,

Gab. And yet unused to poverty,
If I mistake not. Whither were they going ?

Iden. Oh ! Heaven knows where, unless to heaven
itself.

Some days ago that look'd the likeliest journey
For Werner.

Gab. Werner ! I have heard the name :
But it may be a feign'd one.

Iden. Like enough !
But hark ! a noise of wheels and voices, and
A blaze of torches from without. As sure
As destiny, his excellency's come.
I must be at my post ; will you not join me,
To help him from his carriage, and present
Your humble duty at the door ?

Gab. I dragg'd him
From out that carriage when he would have given
His barony or county to repel
The rushing river from his gurgling throat.
He has valets now enough : they stood aloof then,
Shaking their dripping ears upon the shore,
All roaring " Help ! " but offering none ; and as
For *duty* (as you call it)—I did mine *then*,
Now do *yours*. Hence, and bow and cringe him here !

Iden. I cringe !—but I shall lose the opportunity—
Plague take it ! he 'll be *here*, and I *not there* !

[*Exit IDENSTEIN hastily.*]

Re-enter WERNER.

Wer. (to himself). I heard a noise of wheels and voices.
All sounds now jar me! [How

Still here! Is he not [*Perceiving GABOR.*
A spy of my pursuer's? His frank offer
So suddenly, and to a stranger, wore
The aspect of a secret enemy;
For friends are slow at such.

Gab. Sir, you seem rapt;
And yet the time is not akin to thought.
These old walls will be noisy soon. The baron,
Or count (or whatsoe'er this half-drown'd noble
May be), for whom this desolate village and
Its lone inhabitants show more respect
Than did the elements, is come.

Iden. (without). This way—
This way, your excellency:—have a care,
The staircase is a little gloomy, and
Somewhat decay'd; but if we had expected
So high a guest—Pray take my arm, my lord!

*Enter STRALENHEIM, IDENSTEIN, and Attendants—partly
his own, and partly Retainers of the Domain of which
IDENSTEIN is Intendant.*

Stral. I'll rest me here a moment.

Iden. (to the servants). Ho! a chair!
Instantly, knaves! [*STRALENHEIM sits down.*

Wer. (aside). 'T is he!

Stral. I'm better now.
Who are these strangers?

Iden. Please you, my good lord,
One says he is no stranger.

Wer. (aloud and hastily). Who says that?

[*They look at him with surprise.*
Iden. Why, no one spoke of you, or to you!—but
Here's one his excellency may be pleased
To recognise. [*Pointing to GABOR.*

Gab. I seek not to disturb
His noble memory.

Stral. I apprehend
This is one of the strangers to whose aid
I owe my rescue. Is not that the other?

[*Pointing to WERNER.*

My state when I was succour'd must excuse
My uncertainty to whom I owe so much.

Iden. He!—no, my lord! he rather wants for rescue
Than can afford it. 'T is a poor sick man,
Travel-tired, and lately risen from a bed,
From whence he never dream'd to rise.

Stral. Methought
That there were two.

Gab. There were, in company;
But, in the service render'd to your lordship
I needs must say but *one*, and he is absent.
The chief part of whatever aid was render'd
Was *his*: it was his fortune to be first.
My will was not inferior, but his strength
And youth outstripp'd me; therefore do not waste
Your thanks on me. I was but a glad second
Unto a nobler principal.

Stral. Where is he?

An Atten. My lord, he tarried in the cottage where
Your excellency rested for an hour,
And said he would be here to-morrow.

Stral. Till
That hour arrives, I can but offer thanks,
And then——

Gab. I seek no more, and scarce deserve
So much. My comrade may speak for himself.

Stral. (*fixing his eyes upon WERNER: then aside*). It
cannot be! and yet he must be look'd to.

'T is twenty years since I beheld him with
These eyes; and, though my agents still have kept
Theirs on him, policy has held aloof
My own from his, not to alarm him into
Suspicion of my plan. Why did I leave
At Hamburg those who would have made assurance
If this be he or no? I thought, ere now,
To have been lord of Siegendorf, and parted
In haste, though even the elements appear
To fight against me, and this sudden flood
May keep me prisoner here till——

[*He pauses and looks at WERNER; then resumes.*

This man must
Be watch'd. If it is he, he is so changed,
His father, rising from his grave again,

Would pass him by unknown. I must be wary;
An error would spoil all.

Iden. Your lordship seems
Pensive. Will it not please you to pass on?

Stral. 'T is past fatigue, which gives my weigh'd-down
spirit

An outward show of thought. I will to rest.

Iden. The prince's chamber is prepared, with all
The very furniture the prince used when
Last here, in its full splendour.

(Aside). Somewhat tatter'd,
And devilish damp, but fine enough by torchlight;
And that's enough for your right noble blood
Of twenty quarterings upon a hatchment;
So let their bearer sleep 'neath something like one
Now, as he one day will for ever lie.

Stral. (rising and turning to GABOR). Good night, good
people! Sir, I trust to-morrow
Will find me apter to requite your service.
In the mean time I crave your company
A moment in my chamber.

Gab. I attend you.

Stral. (after a few steps, pauses and calls WERNER).
Friend!

Wer. Sir!

Iden. Sir! Lord—oh Lord! Why don't you say
His lordship, or his excellency? Pray,
My lord, excuse this poor man's want of breeding:
He hath not been accustom'd to admission
To such a presence.

Stral. (to IDENSTEIN). Peace, intendant!

Iden. Oh!
I am dumb.

Stral. (to WERNER). Have you been long here?

Wer. Long?

Stral. I sought
An answer, not an echo.

Wer. You may seek
Both from the walls. I am not used to answer
Those whom I know not.

Stral. Indeed! Ne'ertheless,
You might reply with courtesy to what
Is ask'd in kindness.

Wer. When I know it such,
I will requite—that is, *reply*—in unison.

Stral. The intendant said you had been detain'd by sickness—

If I could aid you—journeying the same way?

Wer. (quickly). I am not journeying the same way.

Stral. How know ye
That, ere you know my route?

Wer. Because there is
But one way that the rich and poor must tread
Together. You diverged from that dread path
Some hours ago, and I some days: henceforth
Our roads must lie asunder, though they tend
All to one home.

Stral. Your language is above
Your station.

Wer. (bitterly). Is it?

Stral. Or, at least, beyond
Your garb.

Wer. 'T is well that it is not beneath it,
As sometimes happens to the better clad.
But, in a word, what would you with me?

Stral. (startled). I?

Wer. Yes—you! You know me not, and question me,
And wonder that I answer not—not knowing
My inquisitor. Explain what you would have,
And then I'll satisfy yourself, or me.

Stral. I knew not that you had reasons for reserve.

Wer. Many have such:—Have you none?

Stral. • None which can
Interest a mere stranger.

Wer. Then forgive
The same unknown and humble stranger, if
He wishes to remain so to the man
Who can have nought in common with him.

Stral. Sir,
I will not balk your humour, though untoward:
I only meant you service—but good night! [with me?
Intendant, show the way! (*To GABOR*). Sir, you will
[*Exeunt STRALENHEIM and Attendants, IDENSTEIN and*
GABOR.

Wer. (solus). 'T is he! I am taken in the toils. Before
I quitted Hamburg, Giulio, his late steward,

Inform'd me, that he had obtain'd an order
From Brandenburg's elector, for the arrest
Of Krutzner (such the name I then bore) when
I came upon the frontier ; the free city
Alone preserved my freedom—till I left
Its walls—fool that I was to quit them ! But
I deem'd this humble garb, and route obscure,
Had baffled the slow hounds in their pursuit.
What's to be done ? He knows me not by person ;
Nor could aught, save the eye of apprehension,
Have recognised *him*, after twenty years,
We met so rarely and so coldly in
Our youth. But those about him ! Now I can
Divine the frankness of the Hungarian, who
No doubt is a mere tool and spy of Stralenheim's
To sound and to secure me. Without means I
Sick, poor—begirt too with the flooding rivers,
Impassable even to the wealthy, with
All the appliances which purchase modes
Of overpowering peril, with men's lives,—
How can I hope ? An hour ago methought
My state beyond despair ; and now, 't is such,
The past seems paradise. Another day,
And I'm detected,—on the very eve
Of honours, rights, and my inheritance,
When a few drops of gold might save me still
In favouring an escape.

Enter IDENSTEIN and FRITZ in conversation.

Fritz. Immediately.

Iden. I tell you 't is impossible.

Fritz. It must

Be tried, however ; and if one express
Fail, you must send on others, till the answer
Arrives from Frankfort, from the commandant.

Iden. I will do what I can.

Fritz. And recollect
To spare no trouble ; you will be repaid
Tenfold.

Iden. The baron is retired to rest ?

Fritz. He hath thrown himself into an easy chair
Beside the fire, and slumbers ; and has order'd

He may not be disturb'd until eleven,
When he will take himself to bed.

Iden.

Before

An hour is past I'll do my best to serve him

Fritz. Remember!

[*Exit* FRITZ.]

Iden.

The devil take these great men! they
Think all things made for them. Now here must I
Rouse up some half a dozen shivering vassals
From their scant pallets, and, at peril of
Their lives, despatch them o'er the river towards
Frankfort. Methinks the baron's own experience
Some hours ago might teach him fellow-feeling:
But no, "it *must*," and there's an end. How now?
Are you there, Mynheer Werner?

Wer.

You have left

Your noble guest right quickly.

Iden.

Yes—he's dozing,

And seems to like that none should sleep besides.

Here is a packet for the commandant

Of Frankfort, at all risks and all expenses;

But I must not lose time: Good night!

[*Exit.*

Wer.

"To Frankfort!"

So, so, it thickens! Ay, "the commandant."

This tallies well with all the prior steps

Of this cool, calculating fiend, who walks

Between me and my father's house. No doubt

He writes for a detachment to convey me

Into some secret fortress—Sooner than

This—

[*WERNER looks around, and snatches up a knife lying
on a table in a recess.*

Now I am master of myself at least.

Hark, --footsteps! How do I know that Stralenheim

Will wait for even the show of that authority

Which is to overshadow usurpation?

That he suspects me's certain. I'm alone;

He with a numerous train. I weak; he strong

In gold, in numbers, rank, authority.

I nameless, or involving in my name

Destruction, till I reach my own domain;

He full-blown with his titles, which impose

Still further on these obscure petty burghers

Than they could do elsewhere. Hark! nearer still!

I'll to the secret passage which communicates
 With the——No ! all is silent——'t was my fancy !—
 Still as the breathless interval between .
 The flash and thunder :—I must hush my soul
 Amidst its perils. Yet I will retire,
 To see if still be unexplored the passage
 I wot of : it will serve me as a den
 Of secrecy for some hours, at the worst.

[WERNER *draws a panel, and exit, closing it after him.*

Enter GABOR and JOSEPHINE.

Gab. Where is your husband ?

Jos. *Here,* I thought : I left him
 Not long since in his chamber. But these rooms
 Have many outlets, and he may be gone
 To accompany the intendant.

Gab. Baron Stralenheim
 Put many questions to the intendant on
 The subject of your lord, and, to be plain,
 I have my doubts if he means well.

Jos. Alas !
 What can there be in common with the proud
 And wealthy baron, and the unknown Werner ?

Gab. That you know best.

Jos. Or, if it were so, how
 Come you to stir yourself in his behalf,
 Rather than that of him whose life you saved ?

Gab. I help'd to save him, as in peril ; but
 I did not pledge myself to serve him in
 Oppression. I know well these nobles, and
 Their thousand modes of trampling on the poor.
 I've proved them ; and my spirit boils up when
 I find them practising against the weak :—
 This is my only motive.

Jos. It would be
 Not easy to persuade my consort of
 Your good intentions.

Gab. Is he so suspicious ?

Jos. He was not once ; but time and troubles have
 Made him what you beheld.

Gab. I'm sorry for it.
 Suspicion is a heavy armour, and

With its own weight impedes more than protects.
 Good night ! I trust to meet with him at day-break.

[*Exit GABOR.*]

*Re-enter IDENSTEIN and some Peasants. JOSEPHINE
 retires up the Hall.*

First Peasant. But if I'm drown'd?

Iden. Why, you will be well paid for 't,
 And have risk'd more than drowning for as much,
 I doubt not.

Second Peasant. But our wives and families?

Iden. Cannot be worse off than they are, and may,
 Be better.

Third Peasant. I have neither, and will venture.

Iden. That's right. A gallant carle and fit to be
 A soldier. I'll promote you to the ranks
 In the prince's body-guard—if you succeed ;
 And you shall have besides, in sparkling coin,
 Two thalers.

Third Peasant. No more !

Iden. Out upon your avarice !
 Can that low vice alloy so much ambition ?
 I tell thee, fellow, that two thalers in
 Small change will subdivide into a treasure.
 Do not five hundred thousand heroes daily
 Risk lives and souls for the tithe of one thaler ?
 When had you half the sum ?

Third Peasant. Never—but ne'er
 The less I must have three.

Iden. Have you forgot
 Whose vassal you were born, knave ?

Third Peasant. No—the prince's,
 And not the stranger's.

Iden. Sirrah ! in the prince's
 Absence, I'm sovereign ; and the baron is
 My intimate connexion ;—"Cousin Idenstein !
 (Quoth he) you'll order out a dozen villains."
 And so, you villains ! troop—march—march, I say ;
 And if a single dog's ear of this packet
 Be sprinkled by the Oder—look to it !
 For every page of paper, shall a hide
 Of yours be stretch'd as parchment on a drum,
 Like Ziska's skin, to beat alarm to all

Refractory vassals, who cannot effect
Impossibilities.—Away, ye earthworms!

[Exit driving them out.]

Jos. (coming forward). I fain would shun these scenes,
too oft repeated,
Of feudal tyranny o'er petty victims;
I cannot aid, and will not witness such.
Even here, in this remote, unnamed, dull spot,
The dimmest in the district's map, exist
The insolence of wealth in poverty
O'er something poorer still—the pride of rank
In servitude, o'er something still more servile;
And vice in misery affecting still
A tatter'd splendour. What a state of being!
In Tuscany, my own dear sunny land,
Our nobles were but citizens and merchants,
Like Cosmo. We had evils, but not such
As these; and our all-ripe and gushing valleys
Made poverty more cheertul, where each herb
Was in itself a meal, and every vine
Rain'd, as it were, the beverage which makes glad
The heart of man; and the ne'er misfelt sun
(But rarely clouded, and when clouded, leaving
His warmth behind in memory of his beams)
Makes the worn mantle, and the thin robe, less
Oppressive than an emperor's jewell'd purple.
But, here! the despots of the north appear
To imitate the ice-wind of their clime,
Searching the shivering vassal through his rags,
To wring his soul—as the bleak elements
His form. And 't is to be amongst the sovereigns
My husband pants! and such his pride of birth—
That twenty years of usage, such as no
Father born in a humble state could nerve
His soul to persecute a son withal,
Hath changed no atom of his early nature;
But I, born nobly also, from my father's
Kindness was taught a different lesson. Father I
May thy long-tried and now rewarded spirit
Look down on us and our so long desired
Ulric! I love my son, as thou didst me!
What's that? Thou, Werner! can it be? and thus?

Enter WERNER hastily, with the knife in his hand, by the secret panel, which he closes hurriedly after him.

Wer. (not at first recognising her). Discover'd ! then I'll stab——(recognising her).

Ah ! Josephine,

Why art thou not at rest ?

Jos.

What rest ? My God !

What doth this mean ?

Wer. (showing a rouleau). Here's gold—gold, Josephine, Will rescue us from this detested dungeon.

Jos. And how obtain'd ?—that knife !

Wer.

'T is bloodless—yet.

Away—we must to our chamber.

Jos.

But whence comest thou ?

Wer. Ask not ! but let us think where we shall go—

This—this will make us way—*(showing the gold)*—I'll fit them now.

Jos. I dare not think thee guilty of dishonour.

Wer. Dishonour !

Jos.

I have said it.

Wer.

Let us hence

'T is the last night, I trust, that we need pass here.

Jos. And not the worst, I hope.

Wer.

Hope ! I make *sure*.

But let us to our chamber.

Jos.

Yet one question—

What hast thou *done* ?

Wer. (fiercely).

I left one thing *undone*, which Had made all well : let me not think of it !

Away !

Jos. Alas, that I should doubt of thee !

[*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Hall in the same Palace.*

Enter IDENSTEIN and Others.

Iden. Fine doings ! goodly doings ! honest doings !
A baron pillaged in a prince's palace !
Where, till this hour, such a sin ne'er was heard of.

Fritz. It hardly could, unless the rats despoil'd
The mice of a few shreds of tapestry..

Iden. Oh ! that I e'er should live to see this day !
The honour of our city's gone for ever.

Fritz. Well, but now to discover the delinquent :
The baron is determined not to lose
This sum without a search.

Iden. And so am I.

Fritz. But whom do you suspect ?

Iden. Suspect ! all people
Without—within—above—below—Heaven help me !

Fritz. Is there no other entrance to the chamber ?

Iden. None whatsoever.

Fritz. Are you sure of that ?

Iden. Certain. I have lived and served here since my
And if there were such, must have heard of such, [birth,
Or seen it.

Fritz. Then it must be some one who
Had access to the antechamber.

Iden. Doubtless.

Fritz. The man call'd *Werner's* poor !

Iden. Poor as a miser ;

But lodged so far off, in the other wing,
By which there 's no communication with
The baron's chamber, that it can't be he.
Besides, I bade him "good night" in the hall,
Almost a mile off, and which only leads
To his own apartment, about the same time
When this burglarious, larcenous felony
Appears to have been committed.

Fritz. There's another,
The stranger——

Iden. The Hungarian ?

Fritz. He who help'd
To fish the baron from the Oder.

Iden. Not
Unlikely. But, hold—might it not have been
One of the suite ?

Fritz. How ? *We*, sir !

Iden. No—not *you*,
But some of the inferior knaves. You say
The baron was asleep in the great chair—
The velvet chair—in his embroider'd nightgown ;

His toilet spread before him, and upon it
A cabinet with letters, papers, and
Several rouleaux of gold ; of which *one* only
Has disappear'd :—the door unbolted, with
No difficult access to any.

Fritz.

Good sir,

Be not so quick ; the honour of the corps
Which forms the baron's household 's unimpeach'd
From steward to scullion, save in the fair way
Of peculation ; such as in accompts,
Weights, measures, larder, cellar, buttery,
Where all men take their prey ; as also in
Postage of letters, gathering of rents,
Purveying of feasts, and understanding with
The honest trades who furnish noble masters ;
But for your petty, picking, downright thievery,
We scorn it as we do board-wages. Then
Had one of our folks done it, he would not
Have been so poor a spirit as to hazard
His neck for *one* rouleau, but have swoop'd all ;
Also the cabinet, if portable.

Iden. There is some sense in that——

Fritz.

No, sir, be sure

'T was none of our corps ; but some petty, trivial
Picker and stealer, without art or genius.
The only question is—Who else could have
Access, save the Hungarian and yourself?

Iden. You do n't mean me?

Fritz.

No, sir ; I honour more

Your talents——

Iden.

And my principles, I hope.

Fritz. Of course. But to the point : What's to be
done?

Iden. Nothing—but there's a good deal to be said.

We'll offer a reward ; move heaven and earth,
And the police (though there's none nearer than
Frankfort) ; post notices in manuscript
(For we've no printer) ; and set by my clerk
To read them (for few can, save he and I) ;
We'll send out villains to strip beggars, and
Search empty pockets ; also to arrest
All gipsies, and ill-clothed and sallow people.
Prisoners we'll have at least, if not the culprit ;

And for the baron's gold—if 't is not found,
At least he shall have the full satisfaction
Of meeting twice its substance in the raising
The ghost of this rouleau. Here's alchemy
For your Lord's losses!

Fritz. He hath found a better.

Iden. Where?

Fritz. In a most immense inheritance.
The late Count Siegendorf, his distant kinsman,
Is dead near Prague, in his castle, and my lord
Is on his way to take possession.

Iden. Was there
No heir?

Fritz. Oh yes; but he has disappear'd
Long from the world's eye, and perhaps the world.
A prodigal son, beneath his father's ban
For the last twenty years: for whom his sire
Refused to kill the fatted calf; and, therefore,
If living, he must chew the husks still. But
The baron would find means to silence him,
Were he to re-appear: he's politic,
And has much influence with a certain court.

Iden. He's fortunate.

Fritz. 'T is true there is a grandson,
Whom the late count reclaim'd from his son's hands,
And educated as his heir, but then
His birth is doubtful.

Iden. How so?

Fritz. His sire made
A left-hand, love, imprudent sort of marriage,
With an Italian exile's dark-eyed daughter:
Noble, they say, too; but no match for such
A house as Siegendorf's. The grandsire ill
Could brook the alliance; and could ne'er be brought
To see the parents, though he took the son.

Iden. If he's a lad of mettle, he may yet
Dispute your claim, and weave a web that may
Puzzle your baron to unravel.

Fritz. Why
For mettle, he has quite enough: they say
He forms a happy mixture of his sire
And grandsire's qualities—superbious as
The former, and deep as the latter; but

The strangest is, that he too disappear'd
Some months ago.

Iden. The devil he did !

Fritz. Why, yes ;

It must have been at his suggestion, at
An hour so critical as was the eve
Of the old man's death, whose heart was broken by it.

Iden. Was there no cause assign'd ?

Fritz. Plenty, no doubt,

And none perhaps the true one. Some averr'd
It was to seek his parents ; some because
The old man held his spirit in so strictly
(But that could scarce be, for he doted on him) :
A third believed he wish'd to serve in war,
But peace being made soon after his departure,
He might have since return'd, were that the motive ;
A fourth set charitably have surmised,
As there was something strange and mystic in him,
That in the wild exuberance of his nature
He had join'd the black bands, who lay waste Lusatia,
The mountains of Bohemia and Silesia.
Since the last years of war had dwindled into
A kind of general condottiero system
Of bandit warfare ; each troop with its chief,
And all against mankind.

Iden. That cannot be,
A young heir, bred to wealth and luxury,
To risk his life and honours with disbanded
Soldiers and desperadoes !

Fritz. • Heaven best knows !
But there are human natures so allied
Unto the savage love of enterprise,
That they will seek for peril as a pleasure.
I've heard that nothing can reclaim your Indian,
Or tame the tiger, though their infancy
Were fed on milk and honey. After all,
Your Wallenstein, your Tilly and Gustavus,
Your Bannier, and your Torstenson and Weimar,
Were but the same thing upon a grand scale ;
And now that they are gone, and peace proclaim'd,
They who would follow the same pastime must
Pursue it on their own account. Here comes
The baron, and the Saxon stranger, who

Was his chief aid in yesterday's escape,
But did not leave the cottage by the Oder
Until this morning.

Enter STRALENHEIM and ULRIC.

Stral. Since you have refused
All compensation, gentle stranger, save
Inadequate thanks, you almost check even them,
Making me feel the worthlessness of words,
And blush at my own barren gratitude,
They seem so niggardly, compared with what
Your courteous courage did in my behalf——

Ulr. I pray you press the theme no further.

Stral. But
Can I not serve you? You are young, and of
That mould which throws out heroes; fair in favour;
Brave, I know, by my living now to say so;
And doubtlessly, with such a form and heart,
Would look into the fiery eyes of war,
As ardently for glory as you dared
An obscure death to save an unknown stranger,
In an as perilous, but opposite, element.
You are made for the service: I have served;
Have rank by birth and soldiership, and friends,
Who shall be yours. 'Tis true this pause of peace
Favours such views at present scantily;
But 't will not last, men's spirits are too stirring;
And, after thirty years of conflict, peace
Is but a petty war, as the times show us
In every forest, or a mere arm'd truce.
War will reclaim his own; and, in the mean time,
You might obtain a post, which would insure
A higher soon, and, by my influence, fail not
To rise. I speak of Brandenburg, wherein
I stand well with the Elector; in Bohemia,
Like you, I am a stranger, and we are now
Upon its frontier.

Ulr. You perceive my garb
Is Saxon, and of course my service due
To my own sovereign. If I must decline
Your offer, 't is with the same feeling which
Induced it.

Stral. Why, this is mere usury !
I owe my life to you, and you refuse
The acquittance of the interest of the debt,
To heap more obligations on me, till
I bow beneath them.

Ulr. You shall say so when
I claim the payment.

Stral. Well, sir, since you will not—
You're nobly born ?

Ulr. I have heard my kinsmen say so.

Stral. Your actions show it. Might I ask your name ?

Ulr. Utric.

Stral. Your house's ?

Ulr. When I'm worthy of it,
I'll answer you.

Stral. (aside). Most probably an Austrian,
Whom these unsettled times forbid to boast
His lineage on these wild and dangerous frontiers,
Where the name of his country is abhor'd.

[*Aloud to FRITZ and IDENSTEIN.*

So, sirs ! how have ye sped in your researches ?

Iden. Indifferently well, your excellency.

Stral. Then
I am to deem the plunderer is caught ?

Iden. Humph !—not exactly.

Stral. Or at least suspected ?

Iden. Oh ! for that matter, very much suspected.

Stral. Who may he be ?

Iden. Why, don't you know, my lord ?

Stral. How should I ? I was fast asleep.

Iden. And so
Was I, and that's the cause I know no more
Than does your excellency.

Stral. Dolt !

Iden. Why, if
Your lordship, being robb'd, do n't recognise
The rogue ; how should I, not being robb'd, identify
The thief among so many ? In the crowd,
May it please your excellency, your thief looks
Exactly like the rest, or rather better :
'Tis only at the bar and in the dungeon,
That wise men know your felon by his features ;
But I'll engage, that if seen there but once,

Whether he be found criminal or no,
His face shall be so.

Stral. (to FRITZ). Prithee, Fritz, inform me
What hath been done to trace the fellow?

Fritz. Faith!

My lord, not much as yet, except conjecture.

Stral. Besides the loss (which, I must own, affects me
Just now materially), I needs would find
The villain out of public motives; for
So dexterous a spoiler, who could creep
Through my attendants, and so many peopled
And lighted chambers, on my rest, and snatch
The gold before my scarce-closed eyes, would soon
Leave bare your borough, Sir Intendant!

Iden. True;

If there were aught to carry off, my lord.

Ulr. What is all this?

Stral. You join'd us but this morning,
And have not heard that I was robb'd last night.

Ulr. Some rumour of it reach'd me as I pass'd
The outer chambers of the palace, but
I know no further.

Stral. It is a strange business;
The intendant can inform you of the facts.

Iden. Most willingly. You see—

Stral. (*impatiently.*) Defer your tale,
Till certain of the hearer's patience.

Iden. That

Can only be approved by proofs. You see —

Stral. (*again interrupting him, and addressing ULRIC.*)
In short, I was asleep upon a chair,
My cabinet before me, with some gold
Upon it (more than I much like to lose,
Though in part only): some ingenious person
Contrived to glide through all my own attendants,
Besides those of the place, and bore away
A hundred golden ducats, which to find
I would be fain, and there 's an end. Perhaps
You (as I still am rather faint) would add
To yesterday's great obligation, this,
Though slighter, yet not slight, to aid these men
(Who seem but lukewarm) in recovering it?

Ulr. Most willingly, and without loss of time—
(*To IDENSTEIN*). Come hither, mynheer!

Iden. But so much haste bodes
Right little speed, and——

Ulr. Standing motionless
None; so let's march: we'll talk as we go on.

Iden. But——

Ulr. Show the spot, and then I'll answer you.

Fritz. I will, sir, with his excellency's leave.

Stral. Do so, and take yon old ass with you.

Fritz. Hence!

Ulr. Come on, old oracle, expound thy riddle!

[*Exit with IDENSTEIN and FRITZ.*]

Stral. (solus). A stalwart, active, soldier-looking stripling,
Handsome as Hercules ere his first labour,
And with a brow of thought beyond his years
When in repose, till his eye kindles up
In answering yours. I wish I could engage him:
I've need of some such spirits near me now,
For this inheritance is worth a struggle.
And though I'm not the man to yield without one,
Neither are they who now rise up between me
And my desire. The boy, they say, 's a bold one;
But he hath play'd the truant in some hour
Of freakish folly, leaving fortune to
Champion his claims. That's well. The father, whom
For years I've track'd as does the bloodhound, never
In sight, but constantly in scent, had put me
To fault; but *here* I *have* him, and that's better.
It must be *he*! All circumstance proclaims it;
And careless voices, knowing not the cause
Of my inquiries, still confirm it.—Yes,
The man, his bearing, and the mystery
Of his arrival, and the time; the account, too,
The intendant gave (for I have not beheld her)
Of his wife's dignified but foreign aspect;
Besides the antipathy with which we met,
As snakes and lions shrink back from each other
By secret instinct that both must be foes
Deadly, without being natural prey to either;
All—all—confirm it to my mind. However,
We'll grapple, ne'ertheless. In a few hours

The order comes from Frankfort, if these waters
 Rise not the higher (and the weather favours
 Their quick abatement), and I'll have him safe
 Within a dungeon, where he may avouch
 His real estate and name ; and there's no harm done,
 Should he prove other than I deem. This robbery
 (Save for the actual loss) is lucky also ;
 He's poor, and that's suspicious—he's unknown,
 And that's defenceless.—True, we have no proofs
 Of guilt,—but what hath he of innocence ?
 Were he a man indifferent to my prospects,
 In other bearings, I should rather lay
 The inculcation on the Hungarian, who
 Hath something which I like not ; and alone
 Of all around, except the intendant, and
 The prince's household and my own, had ingress
 Familiar to the chamber.

Enter GABOR.

Friend, how fare you ?

Gab. As those who fare well everywhere, when they
 Have supp'd and slumber'd, no great matter how—
 And you, my lord ?

Stral. Better in rest than purse :
 Mine inn is like to cost me dear.

Gab. I heard
 Of your late loss ; but 't is a trifle to
 One of your order.

Stral. You would hardly think so,
 Were the loss yours.

Gab. I never had so much
 (At once) in my whole life, and therefore am not
 Fit to decide. But I came here to seek you.
 Your couriers are turn'd back—I have outstripp'd them,
 In my return.

Stral. You !—Why ?

Gab. I went at daybreak,
 To watch for the abatement of the river,
 As being anxious to resume my journey.
 Your messengers were all check'd like myself ;
 And, seeing the case hopeless, I await
 The current's pleasure.

Stral. Would the dogs were in it !

'Why did they not, at least, attempt the passage?
I order'd this at all risks.

Gab. Could you order
The Oder to divide, as Moses did
The Red Sea (scarcely redder than the flood
Of the swollen stream), and be obey'd, perhaps
They might have ventured.

Stral. I must see to it:
The knaves! the slaves!—but they shall smart for this.

[*Exit STRALENHEIM.*

Gab. (solus). There goes my noble, feudal, self-will'd
baron!

Epitome of what brave chivalry
The preux chevaliers of the good old times
Have left us. Yesterday he would have given
His lands (if he hath any), and, still dearer,
His sixteen quarterings, for as much fresh air
As would have fill'd a bladder, while he lay
Gurgling and foaming halfway through the window
Of his o'erset and water-logg'd conveyance;
And now he storms at half a dozen wretches
Because they love their lives too! Yet, he's right:
'Tis strange they should, when such as he may put them
To hazard at his pleasure. Oh, thou world!
Thou art indeed a melancholy jest! [*Exit GABOR.*

SCENE II.

The Apartment of WERNER, in the Palace.

Enter JOSEPHINE and ULRIC.

Jos. Stand back, and let me look on thee again!
My Utric!—my beloved!—can it be—
After twelve years.

Ulr. My dearest mother!

Jos

Yes!

My dream is realized—how beautiful!—
How more than all I sigh'd for! Heaven receive
A mother's thanks! a mother's tears of joy!
This is indeed thy work!—At such an hour, too,
He comes not only as a son, but saviour.

Ulr. If such a joy await me, it must double

What I now feel, and lighten from my heart
 A part of the long debt of duty, not
 Of love (for that was ne'er withheld)—forgive me !
 'This long delay was not my fault.

Jos. I know it,
 But cannot think of sorrow now, and doubt
 If I e'er felt it, 't is so dazzled from
 My memory by this oblivious transport !—
 My son !

Enter WERNER.

Wer. What have we here, — more strangers ?

Jos. No !
 Look upon him ! What do you see ?

Wer. A stripling,
 For the first time—

Ulr. (kneeling). For twelve long years, my father !

Wer. Oh, God !

Jos. He faints !

Wer. No—I am better now—
Ulr. (Embraces him).

Ulr. My father, Siegendorf !

Wer. (starting). Hush ! boy—
 The walls may hear that name !

Ulr. What then ?

Wer. Why, then—

But we will talk of that anon. Remember,
 I must be known here but as Werner. Come !
 Come to my arms again ! Why, thou look'st all
 I should have been, and was not. Josephine !
 Sure 't is no father's fondness dazzles me ;
 But, had I seen that form amid ten thousand
 Youth of the choicest, my heart would have chosen
 This for my son !

Ulr. And yet you knew me not !

Wer. Alas ! I have had that upon my soul
 Which makes me look on all men with an eye
 That only knows the evil at first glance.

Ulr. My memory served me far more fondly : I
 Have not forgotten aught ; and oft-times in
 The proud and princely halls of—(I'll not name them,
 As you say that 't is perilous)—but if the pomp
 Of your sire's feudal mansion, I look'd bac-

To the Bohemian mountains many a sunset,
And wept to see another day go down
O'er thee and me, with those huge hills between us.
They shall not part us more.

Wer.

I know not that.

Are you aware my father is no more?

Ulr. Oh, heavens! I left him in a green old age,
And looking like the oak, worn, but still steady
Amidst the elements, whilst younger trees
Fell fast around him. 'T was scarce three months since.

Wer. Why did you leave him?

Jos. (embracing ULRIC). Can you ask that question?
Is he not *here*?

Wer. True; he hath sought his parents,
And found them; but oh! *how*, and in what state!

Ulr. All shall be better'd. What we have to do
Is to proceed, and to assert our rights.
Or rather yours; for I waive all, unless
Your father has disposed in such a sort
Of his broad lands as to make mine the foremost,
So that I must prefer my claim for form:
But I trust better, and that all is yours.

Wer. Have you not heard of Stralenheim?

Ulr.

I saved

His life but yesterday; he's here.

Wer.

You saved

The serpent who will sting us all!

Ulr.

You speak

Riddles: what is this Stralenheim to us?

Wer. Everything. One who claims our father's lands:
Our distant kinsman, and our nearest foe.

Ulr. I never heard his name till now. The count,
Indeed, spoke sometimes of a kinsman, who
If his own line should fail, might be remotely
Involved in the succession; but his titles
Were never named before me—and what then?
His right must yield to ours.

Wer.

Ay, if at Prague;

But here he is all-powerful; and has spread
Snares for thy father, which, if hitherto
He hath escaped them, is by fortune, not
By favour.

Ulr.

Doth he personally know you?

Wer. No ; but he guesses shrewdly at my person,
As he betray'd last night ; and I, perhaps,
But owe my temporary liberty
To his uncertainty.

Ulr. I think you wrong him
(Excuse me for the phrase) ; but Strallenheim
Is not what you prejudge him, or, if so,
He owes me something both for past and present.
I saved his life, he therefore trusts in me.
He hath been plunder'd too, since he came hither :
Is sick ; a stranger ; and as such not now
Able to trace the villain who hath robb'd him :
I have pledged myself to do so ; and the business
Which brought me here was chiefly that : but I
Have found, in searching for another's dross,
My own whole treasure—you, my parents !

Wer. (*agitatedly*). Who
Taught you to mouth that name of "villain" ?

Ulr. What
More noble name belongs to common thieves ?

Wer. Who taught you thus to brand an unknown being
With an infernal stigma ?

Ulr. My own feelings
Taught me to name a ruffian from his deeds.

Wer. Who taught you, long-sought and ill-found boy
that

It would be safe for my own son to insult me ?

Ulr. I named a villain. What is there in common
With such a being and my father ?

Wer. Everything !
That ruffian is thy father !

Jos. Oh, my son !
Believe him not—and yet !— (*her voice falls*).

Ulr. (*starts, looks earnestly at WERNER, and then says slowly,*) And you avow it ?

Wer. Ulrice, before you dare despise your father,
Learn to divine and judge his actions. Young,
Rash, new to life, and reared in luxury's lap,
Is it for you to measure passion's force,
Or misery's temptation ? Wait (not long,
It cometh like the night, and quickly)—Wait !—
Wait till, like me, your hopes are blighted—till
Sorrow and shame are handmaids of your cabin ;

Famine and poverty your guests at table ;
 Despair your bed-fellow—then rise, but not
 From sleep, and judge ! Should that day e'er arrive—
 Should you see then the serpent, who hath coil'd
 Himself around all that is dear and noble
 Of you and yours, lie slumbering in your path,
 With but *his* folds between your steps and happiness ;
 When *he*, who lives but to tear from you name,
 Lands, life itself, lies at your mercy, with
 Chance your conductor ; midnight for your mantle ;
 The bare knife in your hand, and earth asleep,
 Even to your deadliest foe ; and he as 't were
 Inviting death, by looking like it, while
 His death alone can save you :—Thank your God !
 If then, like me, content with petty plunder,
 You turn aside—I did so.

Ulr.

But——

Wer. (abruptly).

Hear me !

I will not brook a human voice—scarce dare
 Listen to my own (if that be human still)—
 Hear me ! you do not know this man—I do.
 He's mean, deceitful, avaricious. You
 Deem yourself safe, as young and brave ; but learn
 None are secure from desperation, few
 From subtilty. My worst foe, Stralenheim,
 Housed in a prince's palace, couch'd within
 A prince's chamber, lay below my knife !
 An instant—a mere motion—the least impulse—
 Had swept him and all fears of mine from earth.
 He was within my power—my knife was raised—
 Withdrawn—and I'm in his—are you not so ?
 Who tells you that he knows you *not* ? Who says
 He hath not lured you here to end you ? or
 To plunge you, with your parents, in a dungeon ?

[*He pauses*

Ulr. Proceed—proceed !

Wer.

Me he hath ever known,

And hunted through each change of time—name—
 fortune—

And why not *you* ? Are you more versed in men ?
 He wound snares round me ; flung along my path
 Reptiles, whom, in my youth, I would have spurn'd
 Even from my presence ; but, in spurning *now*,

Fill only with fresh venom. Will you be
More patient? Ulric!—Ulric!—there are crimes
Made venial by the occasion, and temptations
Which nature cannot master or forbear.

Ulr. (who looks first at him and then at JOSEPHINE).
My mother!

Wer. Ah! I thought so: you have now
Only one parent. I have lost alike
Father and son, and stand alone.

Ulr. But stay!

[*WERNER rushes out of the chamber.*]

Jos. (to ULRIC). Follow him not, until this storm of
passion

Abates. Think'st thou, that were it well for him,
I had not follow'd?

Ulr. I obey you, mother,
Although reluctantly. My first act shall not
Be one of disobedience.

Jos. Oh! he is good!
Condemn him not from his own mouth, but trust
To me, who have borne so much with him, and for him,
That this is but the surface of his soul,
And that the depth is rich in better things.

Ulr. These then are but my father's principles?
My mother thinks not with him?

Jos. Nor doth he
Think as he speaks. Alas! long years of grief
Have made him sometimes thus.

Ulr. Explain to me
More clearly, then, these claims of Stralenheim,
That, when I see the subject in its bearings,
I may prepare to face him, or at least,
To extricate you from your present perils.
I pledge myself to accomplish this—but would
I had arrived a few hours sooner!

Jos. Ay!
Hadst thou but done so!

Enter GABOR and IDENSTEIN, with Attendants.

Gab. (to ULRIC). I have sought you, comrade.
So this is my reward!

Ulr. What do you mean?

Gab. 'Sdeath! have I lived to these years, and for this!
(*To IDENSTEIN*). But for your age and folly, I would——

Iden. Help!
Hands off! Touch an intendant!

Gab. Do not think
I'll honour you so much as save your throat
From the Ravenstone by choking you myself.

Iden. I thank you for the respite: but there are
Those who have greater need of it than me.

Ulr. Unriddle this vile wrangling, or——

Gab. At once, then,
The baron has been robb'd, and upon me
This worthy personage has deign'd to fix
His kind suspicions—me! whom he ne'er saw
Till yester' evening.

Iden. Wouldst have me suspect
My own acquaintances? You have to learn
That I keep better company.

Gab. You shall
Keep the best shortly, and the last for all men,
'The worms! you hound of malice!

Ulr. (*interfering*). [*GABOR seizes on him.*
Nay, no violence;
He's old, unarm'd—be temperate, Gabor!

Gab. (*letting go IDENSTEIN*). True:
I am a fool to lose myself because
Fools deem me knave: it is their homage.

Ulr. (*to IDENSTEIN*). How
Fare you?

Iden. Help!

Ulr. I have help'd you.

Iden. Kill him! then
I'll say so.

Gab. I am calm—live on!

Iden. That's more
Than you shall do, if there be judge or judgment
In Germany. The baron shall decide!

Gab. Does he abet you in your accusation?

Iden. Does he not?

Gab. Then next time let him go sink
Ere I go hang for snatching him from drowning.
But here he comes!

Enter STRALENHEIM.

Gab. (goes up to him). My noble lord, I'm here!

Stral. Well, sir!

Gab. Have you aught with me?

Stral. What should I

Have with you?

Gab. You know best, if yesterday's

Flood has not wash'd away your memory;

But that's a trifle. I stand here accused,

In phrases not equivocal, by yon

Intendant, of the pillage of your person

Or chamber:—is the charge your own or his?

Stral. I accuse no man.

Gab. Then you acquit me, baron?

Stral. I know not whom to accuse, or to acquit,
Or scarcely to suspect.

Gab. But you at least
Should know whom *not* to suspect. I am insulted—

Oppress'd here by these menials, and I look

To you for remedy—teach them their duty!

To look for thieves at home were part of it,

If duly taught; but, in one word, if I

Have an accuser, let it be a man

Worthy to be so of a man like me.

I am your equal.

Stral. You!

Gab. Ay, sir; and, for
Aught that you know, superior; but proceed—
I do not ask for hints, and surmises,
And circumstance, and proof: I know enough
Of what I've done for you, and what you owe me,
To have at least waited your payment rather
Than paid myself, had I been eager of
Your gold. I also know, that were I even
The villain I am deem'd, the service render'd
So recently would not permit you to
Pursue me to the death, except through shame,
Such as would leave your scutcheon but a blank.
But this is nothing: I demand of you
Justice upon your unjust servants, and
From your own lips a disavowal of

All sanction of their insolence : thus much
You owe to the unknown, who asks no more,
And never thought to have ask'd so much.

Stral.

This tone

May be of innocence.

Gab.

'Sdeath ! who dare doubt it,
Except such villains as ne'er had it ?

Stral.

You

Are hot, sir.

Gab.

Must I turn an icicle
Before the breath of menials, and their master ?

Stral. Ulric ! you know this man ! I found him in

Your company.

Gab.

We found *you* in the Oder,
Would we had left you there !

Stral.

I give you thanks, sir.

Gab. I've earn'd them ; but might have earn'd more
from others,

Perchance, if I had left you to your fate.

Stral. Ulric ! you know this man ?

Gab.

No more than you do,
If he avouches not my honour.

Ulr.

I

Can vouch your courage, and, as far as my
Own brief connexion led me, honour.

Stral.

Then

I'm satisfied.

Gab. (ironically). Right easily, methinks.

What is the spell in his asseveration

More than in mine ?

Stral.

I merely said that *I*
Was satisfied—not that you are absolved.

Gab. Again ! Am I accused of no ?

Stral.

Go to !

You were too insolent. If circumstance
And general suspicion be against you,
Is the fault mine ? Is 't not enough that I
Decline all question of your guilt or innocence !

Gab. My lord, my lord, this is mere cozenage,
A vile equivocation ; you well know
Your doubts are certainties to all around you—
Your looks a voice—your frowns a sentence ; you
Are practising your power on me—because

You have it; but beware! you know not whom
You strive to tread on.

Stral. Threat'st thou?

Gab. Not so much

As you accuse. You hint the basest injury,
And I retort it with an open warning.

Stral. As you have said, 't is true I owe you something,
For which you seem disposed to pay yourself.

Gab. Not with your gold.

Stral. With bootless insolence.

[*To his Attendants and IDENSTEIN.*

You need not further to molest this man,
But let him go his way. Ulric, good morrow!

[*Exit STRALENHFIM, IDENSTEIN, and Attendants.*

Gab. (*following*). I'll after him and——

Ulr. (*stopping him*). Not a step.

Gab. Who shall

Oppose me?

Ulr. Your own reason, with a moment's

Thought.

Gab. Must I bear this?

Ulr. Pshaw! we all must bear

The arrogance of something higher than
Ourselves—the highest cannot temper Satan,
Nor the lowest his vicegerents upon earth.

I've seen you brave the elements, and bear
Things which had made this silkworm cast his skin—
And shrink you from a few sharp sneers and words?

Gab. Must I bear to be deem'd a thief? If 't were
A bandit of the woods, I could have borne it—
There's something daring in it:—but to steal
The moneys of a slumbering man!—

Ulr. It seems, then,

You are *not* guilty.

Gab. Do I hear aright?

You too!

Ulr. I merely asked a simple question.

Gab. If the judge ask'd me, I would answer "No"—
To you I answer *thus*. [*He draws.*

Ulr. (*drawing*). With all my heart!

Jos. Without there! Ho! help! help!—Oh, God!
here's murder! [*Exit JOSEPHINE, shrieking.*

GABOR *and* ULRIC *fight*. GABOR *is disarmed just as*
STRALENHEIM, JOSEPHINE, IDENSTEIN, &c., *re-*
enter.

Jos. Oh! glorious heaven! He's safe!

Stral. (to JOSEPHINE).

Who's safe?

Jos.

My——

Ulr. (interrupting her with a stern look, and turning
afterwards to STRALENHEIM). Both!

Here's no great harm done.

Stral.

What hath caused all this?

Ulr. You, baron, I believe; but as the effect

Is harmless, let it not disturb you.—Gabor!

There is your sword; and when you bare it next,

Let it not be against your friends.

[ULRIC pronounces the last words slowly and *empha-*
tically in a low voice to GABOR.

Gab.

I thank you

Less for my life than for your counsel.

Stral.

These

Brawls must end here.

Gab. (taking his sword). They shall. You've wrong'd
me, Ulr,

More with your unkind thoughts than sword: I would

The last were in my bosom rather than

The first in yours. I could have borne yon noble's

Absurd insinuations—ignorance

And dull suspicion are a part of his

Entail will last him longer than his lands.—

But I may fit *him* yet:—you've vanquish'd me.

I was the fool of passion to conceive

That I could cope with you, whom I had seen

Already proved by greater perils than

Rest in this arm. We may meet by and by,

However—but in friendship.

[Exit GABOR.

Stral.

I will brook

No more! This outrage following up his insults,

Perhaps his guilt, has cancell'd all the little

I owed him heretofore for the so-vaunted

Aid which he added to your abler succour.

Ulr, you are not hurt?—

Ulr.

Not even by a scratch.

Stral. (to IDENSTEIN). Intendant ! take your measures to secure

Yon fellow : I revoke my former lenity.

He shall be sent to Frankfort with an escort,

The instant that the waters have abated.

Iden. Secure him ! He hath got his sword again—

And seems to know the use on't ; 't is his trade,

Belike ;—I 'm a civilian.

Stral. Fool ! are not

Yon score of vassals dogging at your heels

Enough to seize a dozen such ? Hence ! after him !

Ulr. Baron, I do beseech you !

Stral. I must be

Obe'y'd. No words !

Iden. Well, if it must be so—

March, vassals ! I 'm your leader, and will bring

The rear up : a wise general never should

Expose his precious life—on which all rests.

I like that article of war.

[*Exit IDENSTEIN and Attendants.*]

Stral.

Come hither,

Ulr. ; what does that woman here ? Oh ! now

I recognise her, 't is the stranger's wife

Whom they name " Werner."

Ulr.

'T is his name.

Stral.

Indeed !

Is not your husband visible, fair dame ?—

Jos. Who seeks him ?

Stral.

No one—for the present : but

I fain would parley, Ulr., with yourself .

Alone.

Ulr. I will retire with you.

Jos.

Not so :

You are the latest stranger, and command

All places here.

(*Aside to ULRIC, as she goes out.*) O Ulr. ! have a care—

Remember what depen is on a rash word !

Ulr. (to JOSEPHINE).

Fear not !—

[*Exit JOSEPHINE.*]

Stral. Ulr., I think that I may trust you ;

You saved my life—and acts like these beget

Unbounded confidence.

Ulr.

Say on.

Have skimm'd it lightly : so that now, besides
Its own exuberance, it bears double value
Confronted with whole realms far and near
Made deserts.

Ulr. You describe it faithfully.

Stral. Ay—could you see it, you would say so—but,
As I have said, you shall.

Ulr. I accept the omen.

Stral. Then claim a recompense from it and me,
Such as *both* may make worthy your acceptance
And services to me and mine for ever.

Ulr. And this sole, sick, and miserable wretch—
This way-worn stranger—stands between you and
This Paradise?—(As Adam did between
The devil and his)—[*Aside*].

Stral. He doth.

Ulr. Hath he no right?

Stral. Right! none. A disinherited prodigal,
Who for these twenty years disgraced his lineage
In all his acts—but chiefly by his marriage,
And living amidst commerce-fetching burghers,
And dabbling merchants, in a mart of Jews.

Ulr. He has a wife, then?

Stral. You'd be sorry to
Call such your mother. You have seen the woman
He *calls* his wife.

Ulr. Is she not so?

Stral. No more
Than he's your father:—an Italian girl,
The daughter of a banish'd man, who lives
On love and poverty with this same Werner.

Ulr. They're childless, then?

Stral. There is or was a bastard,
Whom the old man—the grandsire (as old age
Is ever doting) took to warm his bosom,
As it went chilly downward to the grave;
But the imp stands not in my path—he has fled,
No one knows whither; and if he had not,
His claims alone were too contemptible
To stand.—Why do you smile?

Ulr. At your vain fears;
A poor man almost in his grasp—a child
Of doubtful birth—can startle a grandee!

Stral. All's to be fear'd, where all is to be gain'd.

Ulr. True ; and aught done to save or to obtain it.

Stral. You've harp'd the very string next to my heart.
I may depend upon you ?

Ulr. 'T were too late
To doubt it.

Stral. Let no foolish pity shake
Your bosom (for the appearance of the man
Is pitiful)—he is a wretch, as likely
To have robb'd me as the fellow more suspected,
Except that circumstance is less against him ;
He being lodged far off, and in a chamber
Without approach to mine ; and, to say truth,
I think too well of blood allied to mine,
To deem he would descend to such an act :
Besides, he was a soldier, and a brave one
Once—though too rash.

Ulr. And they, my lord, we know
By our experience, never plunder till
They knock the brains out first—which makes them heirs,
Not thieves. The dead, who feel nought, can lose nothing,
Nor e'er be robb'd : their spoils are a bequest—
No more.

Stral. Go to ! you are a wag. But say
I may be sure you'll keep an eye on this man,
And let me know his slightest movement towards
Concealment or escape ?

Ulr. You may be sure
You yourself could not watch him more than I
Will be his sentinel.

Stral. By this you make me
Yours, and for ever.

Ulr. Such is my intention. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*A Hall in the same Palace, from whence the
secret passage leads.*

Enter WERNER and GABOR.

Gab. Sir, I have told my tale : if it so please you
To give me refuge for a few hours, well—
If not, I'll try my fortune elsewhere.

Wer.

How

Can I, so wretched, give to Misery
A shelter?—wanting such myself as much
As e'er the hunted deer a covert—

Gab.

Or

The wounded lion his cool cave. Methinks
You rather look like one would turn at bay,
And rip the hunter's entrails.

Wer.

Ah!

Gab.

I care not

If it be so, being much disposed to do
The same myself. But will you shelter me?
I am oppress'd like you—and poor like you—
Disgraced —

Wer. (abruptly). Who told you that I was disgraced?

Gab. No one; nor did I say *you* were so: with
Your poverty my likeness ended; but
I said *I* was so—and would add, with truth,
As undeservedly as *you*.

Wer.

Again!

As *I*!

Gab. Or any other honest man.
What the devil would you have? You don't believe me
Guilty of this base theft?

Wer.

No, no—I cannot.

Gab. Why that 's my heart of honour! yon young
gallant—

Your miserly intendant and dense noble—
All—all suspected me: and why? because
I am the worst clothed and least named amongst them;
Although, were Momus' lattice in your breasts,
My soul might brook to open it more widely
Than theirs: but thus it is—you poor and helpless—
Both still more than myself.

Wer.

How knew you that?

Gab. You're right: I ask for shelter at the hand
Which I call helpless; if you now deny it,
I were well paid. But you, who seem to have proved
The wholesome bitterness of life, know well,
By sympathy, that all the outspread gold
Of the New World the Spaniard boasts about,
Could never tempt the man who knows its worth
Weigh'd at its proper value in the balance,

Save in such guise (and there I grant its power,
Because I feel it) as may leave no nightmare
Upon his heart o' nights.

Wer. What do you mean?

Gab. Just what I say; I thought my speech was plain;
You are no thief—nor I—and, as true men,
Should aid each other.

Wer. It is a damn'd world, sir.

Gab. So is the nearest of the two next, as
The priests say (and no doubt they should know best),
Therefore I'll stick by this—as being loth
To suffer martyrdom, at least with such
An epitaph as larceny upon my tomb.
It is but a night's lodging which I crave;
To-morrow I will try the waters, as
The dove did, trusting that they have abated.

Wer. Abated? Is there hope of that?

Gab. There was
At noontide.

Wer. Then we may be safe.

Gab. Are you
In peril?

Wer. Poverty is ever so.

Gab. That I know by long practice. Will you not
Promise to make mine less?

Wer. Your poverty?

Gab. No—you do n't look a leech for that disorder;
I meant my peril only: you've a roof,
And I have none; I merely seek a covert.

Wer. Rightly; for how should such a wretch as I
Have gold?

Gab. Scarce honestly, to say the truth on't,
Although I almost wish you had the baron's.

Wer. Dare you insinuate?

Gab. What?

Wer. Are you aware
To whom you speak?

Gab. No; and I am not used
Greatly to care. (*A noise heard without.*) But hark! they
come!

Wer. Who come?

Gab. The intendant and his man-hounds after me:
I'd face them—but it were in vain to expect

Justice at hands like theirs. Where shall I go?
 But show me any place. I do assure you,
 If there be faith in man, I am most guiltless:
 Think if it were your own case!

Wer. (aside). Oh, just God!
 Thy hell is not hereafter!—Am I dust still?

Gab. I see you're moved; and it shows well in you:
 I may live to requite it.

Wer. Are you not
 A spy of Stralenheim's?

Gab. Not I! and if
 I were, what is there to espy in you?
 Although, I recollect, his frequent question
 About you and your spouse might lead to some
 Suspicion; but you best know—what—and why.
 I am his deadliest foe.

Wer. You?

Gab. After such
 A treatment for the service which in part
 I render'd him, I am his enemy:
 If you are not his friend, you will assist me.

Wer. I will.

Gab. But how?

Wer. (showing the panel). There is a secret spring:
 Remember, I discover'd it by chance,
 And used it but for safety.

Gab. Open it,
 And I will use it for the same.

Wer. I found it,
 As I have said: it leads through winding walls
 (So thick as to bear paths within their ribs,
 Yet lose no jot of strength or stateliness),
 And hollow cells, and obscure niches, to
 I know not whither; you must not advance:
 Give me your word.

Gab. It is unnecessary:
 How should I make my way in darkness through
 A Gothic labyrinth of unknown windings?

Wer. Yes, but who knows to what place it may lead?
 I know not—(mark you!)—but who knows it might not
 Lead even into the chamber of your foe?
 So strangely were contrived these galleries
 By our Teutonic fathers in old days,

When man built less against the elements
Than his next neighbour. You must not advance
Beyond the two first windings; if you do
(Albeit I never pass'd them), I'll not answer
For what you may be led to.

Gab. • • But I will.

A thousand thanks!

Wer. You'll find the spring more obvious
On the other side; and, when you would return,
It yields to the least touch.

Gab. I'll in—farewell!

[GABOR goes in by the secret panel.]

Wer. (solus). What have I done? Alas! what had
I done

Before to make this fearful? Let it be
Still some atonement that I save the man,
Whose sacrifice had saved perhaps my own—
They come! to seek elsewhere what is before them!

Enter IDENSTEIN and Others.

Iden. Is he not here? He must have vanish'd then
Through the dim Gothic glass by pious aid
Of pictured saints upon the red and yellow
Casements, through which the sunset streams like sunrise
On long pearl-colour'd cards and crimson crosses,
And gilded crossiers, and cross'd arms, and cowls,
And helms, and twisted armour, and long swords,
All the fantastic furniture of windows
Dim with brave knights and holy hermits, whose
Likeness and fame alike rest in some panes
Of crystal, which each rattling wind proclaims
As frail as any other life or glory.
He's gone, however.

Wer. Whom do you seek?

Iden. A villain.

Wer. Why need you come so far, then?

Iden. In the search

Of him who robb'd the baron.

Wer. Are you sure

You have divined the man?

Iden. As sure as you

Stand there: but where's he gone?

Wer.

Who?

Iden.

He we sought.

Wer. You see he is not here.

Iden.

And yet we traced him

Up to this hall. Are you accomplices?

Or deal you in the black art?

Wer.

I deal plainly,

To many men the blackest.

Iden.

It may be

I have a question or two for yourself

Hereafter; but we must continue now

Our search for t' other.

Wer.

You had best begin

Your inquisition now: I may not be

So patient always.

Iden.

I should like to know

In good sooth, if you really are the man

That Stralenheim's in quest of.

Wer.

Insolent!

Said you not that he was not here?

Iden.

Yes, *one*;

But there's another whom he tracks more keenly,

And soon, it may be, with authority

Both paramount to his and mine. But, come!

Bustle, my boys! we are at fault.

[*Exit IDENSTEIN and Attendants.*]

Wer.

In what

A maze hath my dim destiny involved me!

And one base sin hath done me less ill than

The leaving undone one far greater. Down,

Thou busy devil, rising in my heart!

Thou art too late! I'll nought to do with blood.

•
Enter ULRIC.

Ulr. I sought you, father.

Wer.

Is't not dangerous?

Ulr. No; Stralenheim is ignorant of all

Or any of the ties between us: more—

He sends me here a spy upon your actions,

Deeming me wholly his.

Wer.

I cannot think it:

'Tis but a snare he winds about us both,

To swoop the sire and son at once.

Ulr. I cannot
 Pause in each petty fear, and stumble at
 The doubts that rise like briars in our path,
 But must break through them, as an unarm'd carle
 Would, though with naked limbs, were the wolf rustling
 In the same thicket where he hew'd for bread.
 Nets are for thrushes, eagles are not caught so :
 We'll overfly or rend them.

Wer. Show me *how* ?

Ulr. Can you not guess ?

Wer. I cannot.

Ulr. That is strange.
 Came the thought ne'er into your mind *last night* ?

Wer. I understand you not.

Ulr. Then we shall never
 More understand each other. But to change
 The topic——

Wer. You mean to *pursue* it, as
 'Tis of our safety.

Ulr. Right ; I stand corrected.
 I see the subject now more clearly, and
 Our general situation in its bearings.
 The waters are abating ; a few hours
 Will bring his summon'd myrmidons from Frankfort,
 When you will be a prisoner, perhaps worse,
 And I an outcast, bastardised by practice
 Of this same baron to make way for him.

Wer. And now your remedy ! I thought to escape
 By means of this accursed gold ; but now
 I dare not use it, show it, scarce look on it.
 Methinks it wears upon its face my guilt
 For motto, not the mintage of the state ;
 And, for the sovereign's head, my own begirt
 With hissing snakes, which curl around my temples,
 And cry to all beholders, Lo ! a villain !

Ulr. You must not use it, at least now ; but take
 This ring. [*He gives WERNER a jewel.*]

Wer. A gem ! It was my father's !

Ulr. And
 As such is now your own. With this you must
 Bribe the intendant for his old caleche
 And horses to pursue your route at sunrise,
 Together with my mother.

Wer. And leave you,
So lately found, in peril too?

Ulr. Fear nothing!
The only fear were if we fled together,
For that would make our ties beyond all doubt.
The waters only lie in flood between
This burgh and Frankfort; so far 's in our favour.
The route on to Bohemia, though encumber'd,
Is not impassable; and when you gain
A few hours' start, the difficulties will be
The same to your pursuers. Once beyond
The frontier, and you 're safe.

Wer. My noble boy!

Ulr. Hush! hush! no transports: we'll indulge in
In Castle Siegendorf! Display no gold! [them
Show Idenstein the gem (I know the man,
And have look'd through him): it will answer thus
A double purpose. Stralenheim lost gold—
No jewel; therefore it could not be his;
And then the man who was possess of this
Can hardly be suspected of abstracting
The baron's coin, when he could thus convert
This ring to more than Stralenheim has lost
By his last night's slumber. Be not over timid
In your address, nor yet too arrogant,
And Idenstein will serve you.

Wer. I will follow
In all things your direction.

Ulr. I would have
Spared you the trouble; but had I appear'd
To take an interest in you, and still more
By dabbling with a jewel in your favour,
All had been known at once.

Wer. My guardian angel!
This overpays the past. But how wilt thou
Fare in our absence?

Ulr. Stralenheim knows nothing
Of me as aught of kindred with yourself.
I will but wait a day or two with him
To lull all doubts, and then rejoin my father.

Wer. To part no more!

Ulr. I know not that; but at
The least we'll meet again once more.

Wer. My boy!
My friend! my only child, and sole preserver!
Oh, do not hate me!

Ulr. Hate my father!

Wer. Ay,
My father hated me. Why not my son?

Ulr. Your father knew you not as I do.

Wer. Scorpions
Are in thy words! thou know me? in this guise
Thou canst not know me, I am not myself;
Yet (hate me not) I will be soon.

Ulr. I'll wait!
In the mean time be sure that all a son
Can do for parents shall be done for mine.

Wer. I see it, and I feel it; yet I feel
Further—that you despise me.

Ulr. Wherefore should I?

Wer. Must I repeat my humiliation?

Ulr. No!
I've fathom'd it and you. But let us talk
Of this no more. Or if it must be ever,
Not now. Your error has redoubled all
The present difficulties of our house,
At secret war with that of Stralenheim;
All we have now to think of is to baffle

HIM. I have shown *one* way.

Wer. The only one,
And I embrace it, as I did my son,
Who show'd *himself* and father's *safety* in
One day.

Ulr. You *shall* be safe; let that suffice.
Would Stralenheim's appearance in Bohemia
Disturb your right, or mine, if once we were
Admitted to our lands?

Wer. Assuredly,
Situate as we are now, although the first
Possessor might, as usual, prove the strongest,
Especially the next in blood.

Ulr. Blood! 't is
A word of many meanings; in the veins,
And out of them, it is a different thing—
And so it should be, when the same in blood
(As it is call'd) are aliens to each other,

Like Theban brethren : when a part is bad,
A few spilt ounces purify the rest.

Wer. I do not apprehend you.

Ulr. That may be—

And should, perhaps—and yet—but get ye ready ;
You and my mother must away to-night.
Here comes the intendant : sound him with the gem ;
'T will sink into his venal soul like lead
Into the deep, and bring up slime and mud,
And ooze too, from the bottom, as the lead doth
With its greased understratum ; but no less
Will serve to warn our vessels through these shoals.
The freight is rich, so heave the line in time !
Farewell ! I scarce have time, but yet your *hand*,
My father !——

Wer. Let me embrace thee !

Ulr. We may be
Observed : subdue your nature to the hour !
Keep off from me as from your foe !

Wer. Accursed
Be he who is the stifling cause which smothers
The best and sweetest feeling of our hearts ;
At such an hour too !

Ulr. Yes, curse—it will ease you !
Here is the intendant.

Enter IDENSTEIN.

Master Idenstein,
How fare you in your purpose ? Have you caught
The rogue ?

Iden. No, faith !

Ulr. Well there are plenty more :
You may have better luck another chase.
Where is the baron ?

Iden. Gone back to his chamber :
And now I think on't, asking after you
With nobly-born impatience.

Ulr. Your great men
Must be answer'd on the instant, as the bound
Of the stung steed replies unto the spur :
'Tis well they've horses, too ; for, if they had not,
I fear that men must draw their chariots, as
They say kings did Sesostriis.

Iden. Who was he?

Ulr. An old Bohemian—an imperial gipsy.

Iden. A gipsy or Bohemian, 't is the same,
For they pass by both names. And was he one?

Ulr. I've heard so ; but I must take leave. Intendant,
Your servant!—Werner (*to WERNER slightly*), if that be
your name,

Yours. [*Exit* ULRIC.

Iden. A well-spoken pretty-faced young man !
And prettily behaved ! He knows his station,
You see, sir : how he gave to each his due
Precedence !

Wer. I perceived it, and applaud
His just discernment and your own.

Iden. That's well—
That's very well. You also know your place, too ;
And yet I don't know that I know your place.

Wer. (*showing the ring*). Would this assist your know-

Iden. How !—What !—Eh ? [ledge ?
A jewel.

Wer. 'T is your own on one condition.

Iden. Mine !—Name it !

Wer. That hereafter you permit me
At thrice its value to redeem it : 't is
A family ring.

Iden. A family !—*yours* !—a gem !
I'm breathless !

Wer. You must also furnish me,
An hour ere daybreak, with all means to quit
This place. •

Iden. But is it real ? Let me look on it :
Diamond, by all that's glorious !

Wer. Come, I'll trust you :
You have guess'd, no doubt, that I was born above
My present seeming.

Iden. I can't say I did,
Though this looks like it : this is the true breeding
Of gentle blood !

Wer. I have important reasons
For wishing to continue privily •
My journey hence.

Iden. So then *you are* the man
Whom Stralenheim's in quest of ?

Wer.

I am not ;

But being taken for him might conduct
 So much embarrassment to me just now,
 And to the baron's self hereafter—'t is
 To spare both that I would avoid all bustle.

Iden. Be you the man or no, 't is not my business ;
 Besides, I never could obtain the half
 From this proud, niggardly noble, who would raise
 The country for some missing bits of coin,
 And never offer a precise reward—
 But *this* !—another look !

Wer.

Gaze on it freely ;

At day-dawn it is yours.

Iden.

(Oh, thou sweet sparkler,

Thou more than stone of the philosopher !
 Thou touchstone of Philosophy herself !
 Thou bright eye of the Mine ! thou loadstar of
 The Soul ! the true magnetic Pole to which
 All hearts point duly north, like trembling needles !
 Thou flaming Spirit of the Earth ! which, sitting
 High on the monarch's diadem attractest
 More worship than the majesty who sweats
 Beneath the crown which makes his head ache, like
 Millions of hearts which bleed to lend it lustre !
 Shalt thou be mine ? I am, methinks, already
 A little king, a lucky alchymist !—
 A wise magician, who has bound the devil
 Without the forfeit of his soul. But come,
 Werner, or what else ?

Wer.

Call me Werner still ;

You may yet know me by a loftier title.

Iden. I do believe in thee ! thou art the spirit

Of whom I long have dream'd in a low garb.—
 But come, I'll serve thee : thou shalt be as free
 As air, despite the waters ; let us hence :
 I'll show thee I am honest—(oh, thou jewel !)
 Thou shalt be furnish'd, Werner, with such means
 Of flight, that if thou wert a snail, not birds
 Should overtake thee.—Let me gaze again !
 I have a foster-brother in the mart

Of Hamburg skill'd in precious stones. How many
 Carats may it weigh ?—Come, Werner, I will wing thee.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

STRALENHEIM'S *Chamber.*

STRALENHEIM and FRITZ.

Fritz. All 's ready, my good lord !

Stral. I am not sleepy,
 And yet I must to bed ; I fain would say
 To rest, but something heavy on my spirit,
 Too dull for wakefulness, too quick for slumber,
 Sits on me as a cloud along the sky,
 Which will not let the sunbeams through, nor yet
 Descend in rain and end, but spreads itself
 'Twixt earth and heaven, like envy between man
 And man, an everlasting mist :—I will
 Unto my pillow.

Fritz. May you rest there well !*Stral.* I feel, and fear, I shall.*Fritz.* And wherefore fear ?

Stral. I know not why, and therefore do fear more,
 Because an undescribable——but 't is
 All folly. Were the locks (as I desired)
 Changed, to-day, of this chamber ? for last night's
 Adventure makes it needful.

Fritz. Certainly,
 According to your order, and beneath
 The inspection of myself and the young Saxon
 Who saved your life. I think they call him "Ulric."

Stral. You *think* ! you supercilious slave ! what right
 Have you to *tax* your memory, which should be
 Quick, proud, and happy to retain the *name*
 (Of him who saved your master, as a litany
 Whose daily repetition marks your duty ?—
 Get hence ! " *You think*," indeed ! you, who stood still
 Howling and dripping on the bank, whilst I
 Lay dying, and the stranger dash'd aside
 The roaring torrent, and restored me to
 Thank him—and despise you. " *You think* !" and scarce
 Can recollect his name ! I will not waste
 More words on you. Call me betimes.

Fritz. Good night !
 I trust to-morrow will restore your lordship
 To renovated strength and temper. [*The scene closes.*

SCENE III.

*The Secret Passage.**Gab. (solus).*

Four—

Five—six hours have I counted, like the guard
 Of outposts on the never-merry clock ;
 That hollow tongue of time, which, even when
 It sounds for joy, takes something from enjoyment
 With every clang. 'T is a perpetual knoll,
 Though for a marriage feast it rings: each stroke
 Peals for a hope the less ; the funeral note
 Of Love deep-buried without resurrection
 In the grave of Possession ; while the knell
 Of long-lived parents finds a jovial echo
 To triple Time in the son's ear.

I'm cold—

I'm dark ;—I've blown my fingers—number'd o'er
 And o'er my steps—and knock'd my head against
 Some fifty buttresses—and roused the rats
 And bats in general insurrection, till
 Their cursed pattering feet and whirling wings
 Leave me scarce hearing for another sound.
 A light ! it is at distance (if I can
 Measure in darkness distance) : but it blinks
 As through a crevice or a key-hole, in
 The inhibited direction : I must on,
 Nevertheless, from curiosity.
 A distant lamp-light is an incident
 In such a den as this. Pray heaven it lead me
 To nothing that may tempt me ! Else—Heaven aid me
 To obtain or to escape it ! Shining still !
 Were it the star of Lucifer himself,
 Or he himself girt with its beams, I could
 Contain no longer. Softly : mighty well !
 That corner's turn'd—so—ah ! no ;—right ! it draws
 Nearer. Here is a darksome angle—so,
 That's weather'd.—Let me pause.—Suppose it leads
 Into some greater danger than that which
 I have escaped—no matter, 't is a new one ;
 And novel perils, like fresh mistresses,
 Wear more magnetic aspects :—I will on,
 And be it where it may—I have my dagger,

Which may protect me at a pinch.—Burn still,
 Thou little light ! Thou art my *ignis fatuus* !
 My stationary Will-o'-the-wisp !—So ! so !
 He hears my invocation, and fails not. [*The scene closes.*]

SCENE IV.—*A Garden.**Enter WERNER.*

Wer. I could not sleep—and now the hour's at hand ;
 All's ready. Idenstein has kept his word ;
 And, station'd in the outskirts of the town,
 Upon the forest's edge, the vehicle
 Awaits us. Now the dwindling stars begin
 To pale in heaven ; and for the last time I
 Look on these horrible walls. Oh ! never, never
 Shall I forget them. Here I came most poor,
 But not dishonour'd : and I leave them with
 A stain,—if not upon my name, yet in
 My heart !—a never-dying canker-worm,
 Which all the coming splendour of the lands,
 And rights, and sovereignty of Siegendorf
 Can scarcely lull a moment. I must find
 Some means of restitution, which would ease
 My soul in part : but how without discovery ?—
 It must be done, however ; and I'll pause
 Upon the method the first hour of safety.
 The madness of my misery led to this
 Base infamy ; repentance must retrieve it :
 I will have nought of Stralenheim's upon
 My spirit, though he would grasp all of mine ;
 Lands, freedom, life,—and yet he sleeps as soundly,
 Perhaps, as infancy, with gorgeous curtains
 Spread for his canopy, o'er silken pillows,
 Such as when——Hark ! what noise is that ? Again !
 The branches shake ; and some loose stones have fallen
 From yonder terrace.

[*ULRIC leaps down from the terrace.*

Ulric ! ever welcome !

Thrice welcome now ! this filial—

Ulr.

Stop ! Before

We approach, tell me——

Wer.

Why look you so ?

Ulr. Do I
Behold my father, or——

Wer. What?

Ulr. An assassin?

Wer. Insane or insolent!

Ulr. Reply, sir, as '
You prize your life, or mine!

Wer. To what must I
Answer?

Ulr. Are you or are you not the assassin
Of Stralenheim?

Wer. I never was as yet
The murderer of any man. What mean you?

Ulr. Did you not *this* night (as the night before)
Retrace the secret passage? Did you not
Again revisit Stralenheim's chamber? and——

[ULRIC *pauses*.]

Wer. Proceed.

Ulr. *Died* he not by your hand?

Wer. Great God!

Ulr. You are innocent, then! my father's innocent!
Embrace me! Yes,—your tone—your look—yes, yes,—
Yet *say so*.

Wer. If I e'er, in heart or mind,
Conceived deliberately such a thought,
But rather strove to trample back to hell
Such thoughts—if e'er they glared a moment through
The irritation of my oppressed spirit—
May heaven be shut for ever from my hopes,
As from mine eyes!

Ulr. But Stralenheim is dead.

Wer. 'T is horrible! 't is hideous, as 't is hateful!—
But what have I to do with this?

Ulr. No bolt
Is forced; no violence can be detected,
Save on his body. Part of his own household
Have been alarm'd; but as the intendant is
Absent, I took upon myself the care
Of mustering the police. His chamber has,
Past doubt, been enter'd secretly. Excuse me,
If nature——

Wer. Oh, my boy! what unknown woes

Of dark fatality, like clouds, are gathering
Above our house !

Ulr. My father ! I acquit you !
But will the world do so ? will even the judge,
If——But you must away this instant.

Wer. No !
I'll face it. Who shall dare suspect me ?

Ulr. Yet
You had *no* guests—*no* visitors—no life
Breathing around you, save my mother's ?

Wer. Ah !
The Hungarian !

Ulr. He is gone ! he disappear'd
Ere sunset.

Wer. No ; I hid him in that very
Conceal'd and fatal gallery.

Ulr. There I'll find him.
[*ULRIC is going.*]

Wer. It is too late : he had left the palace ere
I quitted it. I found the secret panel
Open, and the doors which lead from that hall
Which masks it : I but thought he had snatch'd the silent
And favourable moment to escape
The myrmidons of Idenstein, who were
Dogging him yester-even.

Ulr. You reclosed
The panel ?

Wer. Yes, and not without reproach
(And inner trembling for the avoided peril)
At his dull heedlessness, in leaving thus
His shelterer's asylum to the risk
Of a discovery.

Ulr. You are sure you closed it ?

Wer. Certain.

Ulr. That's well ; but had been better, if
You ne'er had turn'd it to a den for—

[*He pauses.*]

Wer. Thieves !
Thou wouldst say : I must bear it, and deserve it ;
But not——

Ulr. No, father ; do not speak of this :
This is no hour to think of petty crimes,

But to prevent the consequence of great ones.
Why would you shelter this man?

Wer. Could I shun it?

A man pursued by my chief foe ; disgraced
For my own crime : a victim to *my* safety,
Imploring a few hours' concealment from
The very wretch who was the cause he needed
Such refuge. Had he been a wolf, I could not
Have in such circumstances thrust him forth.

Ulr. And like the wolf he hath repaid you. But
It is too late to ponder thus :—you must
Set out ere dawn. I will remain here to
Trace the murderer, if 't is possible.

Wer. But this my sudden flight will give the Moloch
Suspicion : two new victims in the lieu
Of one, if I remain. The fled Hungarian,
Who seems the culprit, and——

Ulr. Who *seems*? Who else
Can be so?

Wer. Not *I*, though just now you doubted—
You, my *son*!—doubted——

Ulr. And do you doubt of him
The fugitive?

Wer. Boy ! since I fell into
The abyss of crime (though not of *such* crime), I,
Having seen the innocent oppress'd for me,
May doubt even of the guilty's guilt. Your heart
Is free, and quick with virtuous wrath to accuse
Appearances ; and views a criminal
In Innocence's shadow, it may be,
Because 't is dusky.

Ulr. And if I do so,
What will mankind, who know you not, or knew
But to oppress? You must not stand the hazard.
Away !—I'll make all easy. Idenstein
Will for his own sake and his jewel's hold
His peace—he also is a partner in
Your flight—moreover——

Wer. Fly ! and leave my name
Link'd with the Hungarian's, or preferr'd as poorest,
To bear the brand of bloodshed?

Ulr. Pshaw ! leave anything
Except our fathers' sovereignty and castles,

For which you've so long panted, and in vain!
What *name*? You have *no name*, since that you bear
Is feign'd.

Wer. Most true: but still I would not have it
Engraved in crimson in men's memories,
Though in this most obscure abode of men——
Besides, the search——

Ulr. I will provide against
Aught that can touch you. No one knows you here
As heir of Siegendorf: if Idenstein
Suspects, 't is *but suspicion*, and he is
A fool: his folly shall have such employment,
Too, that the unknown Werner shall give way
To nearer thoughts of self. The laws (if e'er
Laws reach'd this village) are all in abeyance
With the late general war of thirty years,
Or crush'd, or rising slowly from the dust,
To which the march of armies trampled them.
Stralenheim, although noble, is unheeded
Here, save as *such*—without lands, influence,
Save what hath perish'd with him. Few prolong
A week beyond their funeral rites their sway
O'er men, unless by relatives, whose interest
Is roused: such is not here the case; he died
Alone, unknown,—a solitary grave,
Obscure as his deserts, without a scutcheon
Is all he'll have, or wants. If I discover
The assassin, 't will be well—if not, believe me,
None else; though all the full-fed train of menials
May howl above his ashes (as they did
Around him in his danger on the Oder),
Will no more stir a finger *now* than *then*.
Hence! hence! I must not hear your answer.—Look!
The stars are almost faded, and the grey
Begins to grizzle the black hair of night.
You shall not answer:—Pardon me that I
Am peremptory! 't is your son that speaks,
Your long-lost, late-found son.—Let's call my mother!
Softly and swiftly step, and leave the rest
To me: I'll answer for the event as far
As regards *you*, and that is the chief point,
As my first duty, which shall be observed.
We'll meet in Castle Siegendorf—once more

Our banners shall be glorious ! Think of that
 Alone, and leave all other thoughts to me,
 Whose youth may better battle with them—Hence !
 And may your age be happy !—I will kiss
 My mother once more, then Heaven's speed be with you !
Wer. This counsel's safe—but is it honourable ?
Ulr. To save a father is a child's chief honour.
[*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*A Gothic Hall in the Castle of Siegendorf,
 near Prague.*

Enter ERIC and HENRICK, Retainers of the Count.

Eric. So, better times are come at last ; to these
 Old walls new masters and high wassail—both
 A long desideratum.

Hen. Yes, for masters,
 It might be unto those who long for novelty,
 Though made by a new grave : but as for wassail,
 Methinks the old Count Siegendorf maintain'd
 His feudal hospitality as high
 As e'er another prince of the empire.

Eric. Why
 For the mere cup and trencher, we no doubt
 Fared passing well ; but as for merriment
 And sport, without which salt and sauces season
 The cheer but scantily, our sizings were
 Even of the narrowest.

Hen. The old count loved not
 The roar of revel ; are you sure that *this* does ?

Eric. As yet he hath been courteous as he's bounteous,
 And we all love him.

Hen. His reign is as yet
 Hardly a year o'erpast its honey-moon,
 And the first year of sovereigns is bridal :
 Anon, we shall perceive his real sway
 And moods of mind.

Eric. Pray heaven he keep the present !
 Then his brave son, Count Ulric, there's a knight !
 Pity the wars are o'er !

Hen. Why so ?

Eric. Look on him !
And answer that yourself.

Hen. He's very youthful,
And strong and beautiful as a young tiger.

Eric. That's not a faithful vassal's likeness.

Hen. But
Perhaps a true one.

Eric. Pity, as I said,
The wars are over : in the hall, who like
Count Ulric for a well-supported pride,
Which awes, but yet offends not ? in the field,
Who like him with his spear in hand, when, gnashing
His tusks, and ripping up from right to left
The howling hounds, the boar makes for the thicket ?
Who backs a horse, or bears a hawk, or wears
A sword like him ? Whose plume nods knightlier ?

Hen. No one's, I grant you. Do not fear, if war
Be long in coming, he is of that kind
Will make it for himself, if he hath not
Already done as much.

Eric. What do you mean ?

Hen. You can't deny his train of followers
(But few our native fellow-vassals born
On the domain) are such a sort of knaves
As——

[*Pauses.*]

Eric. What ?

Hen. The war (you love so much) leaves living.
Like other parents, she spoils her worst children.

Eric. Nonsense ! they are all brave iron-visaged fellows,
Such as old Tilly loved.

Hen. And who loved Tilly ?
Ask that at Magdebourg—or for that matter
Wallenstein either ;—they are gone to——

Eric. Rest !
But what beyond 't is not ours to pronounce.

Hen. I wish they had left us something of their rest :
The country (nominally now at peace)
Is over-run with—God knows who : they fly
By night, and disappear with sunrise ; but
Leave us no less desolation, nay, even more,
Than the most *open* warfare.

Eric. But Count Ulric—
What has all this to do with him ?

Hen.

With *him*!

He——might prevent it. As you say he's fond
Of war, why makes he it not on those marauders?

Eric. You'd better ask himself.

Hen.

I would as soon

Ask the young lion why he laps not milk.

Eric. And here he comes!

Hen.

The devil! you'll hold your tongue?

Eric. Why do you turn so pale?

Hen.

'T is nothing—but

Be silent.

Eric. I will, upon what you have said.

Hen. I assure you I meant nothing,—a mere sport
Of words, no more; besides, had it been otherwise,
He is to espouse the gentle Baroness
Ida of Stralenheim, the late baron's heiress;
And she, no doubt, will soften whatsoever
Of fierceness the late long intestine wars
Have given all natures, and most unto those
Who were born in them, and bred up upon
The knees of Homicide; sprinkled, as it were,
With blood even at their baptism. Prithee, peace
On all that I have said!

Enter ULRIC and RODOLPH.

Good morrow, Count.

Ulr. Good morrow, worthy Henrick. *Eric*, is
All ready for the chase?

Eric.

The dogs are order'd

Down to the forest, and the vassals out
To beat the bushes, and the day looks promising.
Shall I call forth your excellency's suite?
What courser will you please to mount?

Ulr.

The dun,

Walstein.

Eric. I fear he scarcely has recover'd
The toils of Monday: 't was a noble chase:
You spear'd *four* with your own hand.

Ulr.

True, good *Eric*;

I had forgotten—let it be the grey, then,
Old Ziska: he has not been out this fortnight.

Eric. He shall be straight caparison'd. How many

Of your immediate retainers shall
Escort you?

Ulr. I leave that to Weilburgh, our
Master of the horse. [Exit ERIC.

Rodolph!

Rod. My lord!

Ulr. The news
Is awkward from the—— [RODOLPH points to HENRICK.
How now, Henrick? why

Loiter you here?

Hen. For your commands, my lord.

Ulr. Go to my father, and present my duty,
And learn if he would aught with me before
I mount. [Exit HENRICK.

Rodolph, our friends have had a check
Upon the frontiers of Franconia, and
'Tis rumour'd that the column sent against them
Is to be strengthen'd. I must join them soon.

Rod. Best wait for further and more sure advices.

Ulr. I mean it—and indeed it could not well
Have fallen out at a time more opposite
To all my plans.

Rod. It will be difficult
To excuse your absence to the count your father.

Ulr. Yes, but the unsettled state of our domain
In high Silesia will permit and cover
My journey. In the mean time, when we are
Engaged in the chase, draw off the eighty men
Whom Wolffe leads—keep the forests on your route:
You know it well?

Rod. As well as on that night
When we——

Ulr. We will not speak of that until
We can repeat the same with like success:
And when you've join'd, give Rosenberg this letter.
[Gives a letter.

Add further, that I have sent this slight addition
To our force with you and Wolffe, as herald of
My coming, though I could but spare them ill
At this time, as my father loves to keep
Full numbers of retainers round the castle,
Until this marriage, and its feasts and fooleries,
Are rung out with its peal of nuptial nonsense.

Rod. I thought you loved the lady Ida?

Ulr.

Why,

I do so—but it follows not from that
I would bind in my youth and glorious years,
So brief and burning, with a lady's zone,
Although 't were that of Venus:—but I love her,
As woman should be loved, fairly and solely.

Rod. And constantly?

Ulr.

I think so; for I love
Nought else.—But I have not the time to pause
Upon these gewgaws of the heart. ' Great things
We have to do ere long. Speed! speed! good Rodolph!

Rod. On my return, however, I shall find
The Baroness Ida lost in Countess Siegendorf?

Ulr. Perhaps my father wishes it; and sooth
'T is no bad policy: this union with
The last bud of the rival branch at once
Unites the future and destroys the past.

Rod. Adieu.

Ulr.

Yet hold—we 'd better keep together
Until the chase begins; then draw thou off,
And do as I have said.

Rod.

I will. But to
Return—'t was a most kind act in the count
Your father to send up to Königsberg
For this fair orphan of the baron, and
To hail her as his daughter.

Ulr.

Wondrous kind!
Especially as little kindness till
Then grew between them.

Rod.

The late baron died
Of a fever, did he not?

Ulr.

How should I know?

Rod. I have heard it whisper'd there was something
About his death—and even the place of it [strange
Is scarcely known.

Ulr.

Some obscure village on
The Saxon or Silesian frontier.

Rod.

He
Has left no testament—no farewell words?

Ulr. I am neither confessor nor notary,
So cannot say.

Rod.

Ah! here 's the lady Ida.

Enter IDA STRALENHEIM.

Ulr. You are early, my sweet cousin !

Ida.

Not *too* early,

Dear Ulric, if I do not interrupt you.

Why do you call me "*cousin*" ?

Ulr. (smiling).

Are we not so ?

Ida. Yes, but I do not like the name ; methinks

It sounds so cold, as if you thought upon

Our pedigree, and only weigh'd our blood.

Ulr. (starting).

Blood !

Ida. Why does yours start from your cheeks ?

Ulr.

Ay ! doth it ?

Ida. It doth—but no ! it rushes like a torrent

Even to your brow again.

Ulr. (recovering himself). And if it fled,

It only was because your presence sent it

Back to my heart, which beats for you, sweet cousin !

Ida. "Cousin" again.

Ulr.

Nay, then, I'll call you sister.

Ida. I like that name still worse.—Would we had ne'er
Been aught of kindred !

Ulr. (gloomily).

Would we never had !

Ida. Oh, heavens ! and can *you wish that* !

Ulr.

Dearest *Ida* !

Did I not echo your own wish ?

Ida.

Yes, Ulric,

But then I wish'd it not with such a glance,

And scarce knew what I said ; but let me be

Sister or cousin, what you will, so that

I still to you am something.

Ulr.

You shall be

All—all——

Ida.

And you to *me* are so already ;

But I can wait.

Ulr.

Dear *Ida* !

Ida.

Call me *Ida*,

Your *Ida*, for I would be yours, none else's—

Indeed, I've none else left, since my poor father—

[*She pauses.*

Ulr. You have *mine*—you have *me*.

Ida.

Dear Ulric, how I wish

My father could but view my happiness,
Which wants but this !

Ulr. Indeed !

Ida. You would have loved him,
He you ; for the brave ever love each other ;
His manner was a little cold, his spirit
Proud (as is birth's prerogative) ; but under
This grave exterior—— Would you had known each
other !

Had such as you been near him on his journey,
He had not died without a friend to soothe
His last and lonely moments.

Ulr. Who says *that* ?

Ida. What ?

Ulr. That he *died alone*.

Ida. The general rumour,
And disappearance of his servants, who
Have ne'er return'd : that fever was most deadly
Which swept them all away.

Ulr. If they were near him,
He could not die neglected or alone.

Ida. Alas ! what is a menial to a death-bed,
When the dim eye rolls vainly round for what
It loves ?—They say he died of a fever.

Ulr. *Say !*

It *was* so.

Ida. I sometimes dream otherwise.

Ulr. All dreams are false.

Ida. And yet I see him as
I see you.

Ulr. *Where ?*

Ida. In sleep—I see him lie
Pale, bleeding, and a man with a raised knife
Beside him.

Ulr. But you do not see his *face* !

Ida. (*looking at him*). No ! Oh, my God ! do *you* ?

Ulr. Why do you ask ?

Ida. Because you look as if you saw a murderer !

Ulr. (*agitatedly*). *Ida*, this is mere childishness ; your
weakness

Infects me, to my shame : but as all feelings
Of yours are common to me, it affects me.
Prithee, sweet child, change——

Ida. Child, indeed ! I have
Full fifteen summers ! *[A bugle sounds.*

Rod. Hark, my lord, the bugle !

Ida. *(peevishly to RODOLPH).* Why need you tell him
that ? Can he not hear it
Without your echo ?

Rod. Pardon me, fair baroness !

Ida. I will not pardon you, unless you earn it
By aiding me in my dissuasion of
Count Ulric from the chase to-day.

Rod. You will not,
Lady, need aid of mine.

Ulr. I must not now
Forego it.

Ida. But you shall !

Ulr. *Shall !*

Ida. Yes, or be
No true knight.—Come, dear Ulric ! yield to me
In this, for this one day : the day looks heavy,
And you are turn'd so pale and ill.

Ulr. You jest.

Ida. Indeed I do not :—ask of Rodolph.

Rod. Truly,
My lord, within this quarter of an hour
You have changed more than e'er I saw you change
In years.

Ulr. 'T is nothing ; but if 't were, the air
Would soon restore me. I 'm the true chameleon,
And live but on the atmosphere ; your feasts
In castle halls, and social banquets, nurse not
My spirit—I 'm a forester and breather
Of the steep mountain-tops, where I love all
The eagle loves.

Ida. Except his prey, I hope.

Ulr. Sweet *Ida*, wish me a fair chase, and I
Will bring you six boars' heads for trophies home.

Ida. And will you not stay, then ? You shall not go !
Come ! I will sing to you.

Ulr. *Ida*, you scarcely
Will make a soldier's wife.

Ida. I do not wish
To be so ; for I trust these wars are over,
And you will live in peace on your domains.

Enter WERNER as COUNT SIEGENDORF.

Ulr. My father, I salute you, and it grieves me
With such brief greeting.—You have heard our bugle ;
The vassals wait.

Sieg. So let them.—You forget'
To-morrow is the appointed festival
In Prague for peace restored. You are apt to follow
The chase with such an ardour as will scarce
Permit you to return to-day, or if
Return'd, too much fatigued to join to-morrow
The nobles in our marshall'd ranks.

Ulr. You, count,
Will well supply the place of both—I am not
A lover of these pageantries.

Sieg. No, Ulric
It were not well that you alone of all
Our young nobility——

Ida. And far the noblest
In aspect and demeanour.

Sieg. (to IDA). True, dear child,
Though somewhat frankly said for a fair damsel.—
But, Ulric, recollect too our position,
So lately reinstated in our honours.
Believe me, 't would be mark'd in any house,
But most in *ours*, that ONE should be found wanting
At such a time and place. Besides, the Heaven
Which gave us back our own, in the same moment
It spread its peace o'er all, hath double claims
On us for thanksgiving : first, for our country ;
And next, that we are here to share its blessings.

Ulr. (aside). Devout, too ! Well, sir, I obey at once.
(*Then aloud to a Servant.*) Ludwig, dismiss the train
without ! [*Exit* LUDWIG.]

Ida. And so
You yield at once to him what I for hours
Might supplicate in vain.

Sieg. (smiling). You are not jealous
Of me, I trust, my pretty rebel ! who
Would sanction disobedience against all
Except thyself ? but fear not ; thou shalt rule him
Hereafter with a fonder sway and firmer.

Ida. But I should like to govern *now*.

Sieg. You shall,

Your *harp*, which by the way awaits you with
The countess in her chamber. She complains
That you are a sad truant to your music:
She attends you.

Ida. Then good morrow, my kind kinsmen!
Ulric, you'll come and hear me?

Ulr. By-and-by.

Ida. Be sure I'll sound it better than your bugles;
Then pray you be as punctual to its notes:
I'll play you King Gustavus' march.

Ulr. And why not
Old Tilly's?

Ida. Not that monster's! I should think
My harp-strings ran with groans, and not with music,
Could aught of *his* sound on it:—but come quickly;
Your mother will be eager to receive you. [*Exit.*

Sieg. *Ulric*, I wish to speak with you alone.

Ulr. My time's your vassal.—

(*Aside to RODOLPH*). *Rodolph*, hence! and do
As I directed: and by his best speed
And readiest means let *Rosenberg* reply.

Rod. Count *Siegendorf*, command you aught? I'm
Upon a journey past the frontier. [bound

Sieg. (*starts*). Ah!—
Where! on *what* frontier?

Rod. The Silesian, on
My way—(*aside to ULRIC*).—Where shall I say?
Ulr. (*aside to RODOLPH*). To *Hamburg*.

(*Aside to himself*). That
Word will, I think, put a firm padlock on
His further inquisition.

Rod. Count, to *Hamburg*.

Sieg. (*agitated*). *Hamburg*! No, I have nought to do
Am aught connected with that city. Then [there, nor
God speed you!

Rod. Fare ye well, Count *Siegendorf*!
[*Exit RODOLPH.*

Sieg. *Ulric*, this man, who has just departed, is
One of those strange companions whom I fain
Would reason with you on.

Ulr. My lord, he is
Noble by birth, of one of the first houses
In *Saxony*.

Sieg. I talk not of his birth,

But of his bearing. Men speak lightly of him.

Ulr. So they will do of most men. Even the monarch
Is not fenced from his chamberlain's slander, or
The sneer of the last courtier whom he has made
Great and ungrateful.

Sieg. If I must be plain,
The world speaks more than lightly of this Rodolph :
They say he's leagued with the "black bands" who still
Ravage the frontier.

Ulr. And will you believe
The world?

Sieg. In this case—yes.

Ulr. In *any* case,
I thought you knew it better than to take
An accusation for a sentence.

Sieg. Son !
I understand you : you refer to—but
My destiny has so involved about me
Her spider web, that I can only flutter
Like the poor fly, but break it not. Take heed,
Ulric ; you've seen to what the passions led me :
Twenty long years of misery and famine
Quench'd them not—twenty thousand more, perchance,
Hereafter (or even here in *moments* which
Might date for years, did Anguish make the dial)
May not obliterate or expiate
The madness and dishonour of an instant.
Ulric, be warn'd by a father !—I was not
By mine, and you behold me !

Ulr. I behold
The prosperous and beloved Siegendorf,
Lord of a prince's appanage, and honour'd
By those he rules and those he ranks with.

Sieg. Ah !
Why wilt thou call me prosperous, while I fear
For thee ? Beloved, when thou lovest me not !
All hearts but one may beat in kindness for me—
But if my son's is cold !——

Ulr. Who *dare* say that ?
Sieg. None else but I, who see it—*feel* it—*keen*er
Than would your adversary, who dared say so,
Your sabre in his heart ! But mine survives
The wound.

Ulr. You err. My nature is 'not given
To outward fondling : how should it be so,
After twelve yēars' divorcement from my parents ?

Sieg. And did not *I* too pass those twelve torn years
In a like absence ? But 't is vain to urge you—
Nature was never call'd back by remonstrance.
Let's change the theme. I wish you to consider
That these young violent nobles of high name,
But dark deeds (ay, the darkest, if all Rumour
Reports be true), with whom thou consortest,
Will lead thee—

Ulr. (impatiently). I'll be led by no man.

Sieg.

Nor

Be leader of such, I would hope : at once
To wean thee from the perils of thy youth
And haughty spirit, I have thought it well
That thou shouldst wed the lady Ida—more
As thou appear'st to love her.

Ulr. I have said
I will obey your orders, were they to
Unite with Hecate—can a son say more ?

Sieg. He says too much in saying this. It is not
The nature of thine age, nor of thy blood,
Nor of thy temperament, to talk so coolly,
Or act so carelessly, in that which is
The bloom or blight of all men's happiness,
(For Glory's pillow is but restless, if
Love lay not down his cheek there); some strong bias,
Some master fiend, is in thy service, to
Misrule the mortal who believes him slave,
And makes his every thought subservient ; else
Thou 'dst say at once—"I love young Ida, and
Will wed her ;" or, "I love her not, and all
The powers of earth shall never make me."—So
Would I have answer'd.

Ulr. Sir, you wed for love.

Sieg. I did, and it has been my only refuge
In many miseries.

Ulr. Which miseries
Had never been but for this love-match.

Sieg. Still
Against your age and nature ! Who at twenty
E'er answer'd thus till now ?

Ulr. Did you not warn me
Against your own example?

Sieg. Boyish sophist!
In a word, do you love, or love not, Ida?

Ulr. What matters it, if I am ready to
Obey you in espousing her?

Sieg. As far
As you feel, nothing, but all life for her.
She's young—all-beautiful—adores you—is
Endow'd with qualities to give happiness,
Such as rounds common life into a dream
Of something which your poets cannot paint,
And (if it were not wisdom to love virtue)
For which Philosophy might barter Wisdom;
And giving so much happiness, deserves
A little in return. I would not have her
Break her heart for a man who has none to break;
Or wither on her stalk like some pale rose
Deserted by the bird she thought a nightingale,
According to the Orient tale. She is——

Ulr. The daughter of dead Stralenheim, your foe:
I'll wed her, ne'ertheless; though, to say truth,
Just now I am not violently transported
In favour of such unions.

Sieg. But she loves you.

Ulr. And I love her, and therefore would think *twice*.

Sieg. Alas! Love never *did* so.

Ulr. Then 't is time
He should begin, and take the bandage from
His eyes, and look before he leaps; till now
He hath ta'en a jump i' the dark.

Sieg. But you consent?

Ulr. I did, and do.

Sieg. Then fix the day.

Ulr. 'T is usual,
And certes courteous, to leave that to the lady.

Sieg. I will engage for *her*.

Ulr. So will not I,
For any woman: and as what I fix,
I fain would see unshaken, when she gives
Her answer I'll give mine.

Sieg. But 't is your office
To woo.

Ulr. Count, 't is a marriage of your making,
So be it of your wooing ; but to please you,
I will now pay my duty to my mother,
With whom, you know, the lady Ida is.—
What would you have ? You have forbid my stirring
For manly sports beyond the castle walls,
And I obey ; you bid me turn a chamberer,
To pick up gloves, and fans, and knitting-needles,
And list to songs and tunes, and watch for smiles,
And smile at pretty prattle, and look into
The eyes of feminine, as though they were
The stars receding early to our wish
Upon the dawn of a world-winning battle—
What can a son or man do more ? *[Exit ULRIC.]*

Sieg. (solus). Too much !—
Too much of duty, and too little love !
He pays me in the coin he owes me not :
For such hath been my wayward fate, I could not
Fulfil a parent's duties by his side
Till now ; but love he owes me, for my thoughts
Ne'er left him, nor my eyes long'd without tears
To see my child again, and now I've found him !
But how—obedient, but with coldness ; duteous
In my sight, but with carelessness ; mysterious—
Abstracted—distant—much given to long absence,
And where—none know—in league with the most riotous
Of our young nobles ; though, to do him justice,
He never stoops down to their vulgar pleasures ;
Yet there's some tie between them which I cannot
Unravel. They look up to him—consult him—
Throng round him as a leader : but with me
He hath no confidence ! Ah ! can I hope it
After—what ! doth my father's curse descend
Even to my child ? Or is the Hungarian near,
To shed more blood ? or—Oh ! if it should be !
Spirit of Stralenheim, dost thou walk these walls
To wither him and his—who, though they slew not,
Unlatch'd the door of death for thee ? 'T was not
Our fault, nor is our sin : thou wert our foe,
And yet I spared thee when my own destruction
Slept with thee, to awake with thine awakening !
And only took—Accursed gold ! thou liest
Like poison in my hands ; I dare not use thee,

Nor part from thee ; thou camest in such a guise,
 Methinks thou wouldst contaminate all hands
 Like mine. Yet I have done, to atone for thee,
 Thou villainous gold ! and thy dead master's doom,
 Though he died not by me or mine, as much
 As if he were my brother ! I have ta'en
 His orphan Ida—cherish'd her as one
 Who will be mine.

Enter an ATTENDANT.

Atten. The abbot, if it please
 Your excellency, whom you sent for, waits
 Upon you. *[Exit ATTENDANT.]*

Enter the PRIOR ALBERT.

Prior. Peace be with these walls, and all
 Within them !

Sieg. Welcome, welcome, holy father !
 And may thy prayer be heard !—all men have need
 Of such, and I——

Prior. Have the first claim to all
 The prayers of our community. Our convent,
 Erected by your ancestors, is still
 Protected by their children.

Sieg. Yes, good father ;
 Continue daily orisons for us
 In these dim days of heresies and blood,
 Though the schismatic Swede, Gustavus, is
 Gone home.

Prior. To the endless home of unbelievers,
 Where there is everlasting wail and woe,
 Gnashing of teeth, and tears of blood, and fire
 Eternal, and the worn. which dieth not !

Sieg. True, father : and to avert those pangs from one,
 Who, though of our most faultless holy Church,
 Yet died without its last and dearest offices,
 Which smooth the soul through purgatorial pains
 I have to offer humbly this donation
 In masses for his spirit.

*[SIEGENDORF offers the gold which he had taken from
 STRALENHEIM.]*

Prior. Count, if I
 Receive it, 't is because I know too well

Refusal would offend you. Be assured
The largess shall be only dealt in alms,
And every mass no less sung for the dead.
Our house needs no donations, thanks to yours,
Which has of old endow'd it; but from you
And yours in all meet things 't is fit we obey.
For whom shall mass be said?

Sieg. (*faltering*). For—for—the dead.

Prior. His name?

Sieg. 'T is from a soul, and not a name,
I would avert perdition.

Prior. I meant not
To pry into your secret. We will pray
For one unknown, the same as for the proudest.

Sieg. Secret! I have none: but, father, he who's gone
Might *have* one; or, in short, he did bequeath—
No, not bequeath—but I bestow this sum
For pious purposes.

Prior. A proper deed
In the behalf of our departed friends.

Sieg. But he who's gone was not my friend, but foe,
The deadliest and the staunchest.

Prior. Better still!
To employ our means to obtain heaven for the souls
Of our dead enemies is worthy those
Who can forgive them living.

Sieg. But I did not
Forgive this man. I loathed him to the last,
As he did me. I do not love him now,
But——

Prior. Best of all! for this is pure religion:
You fain would rescue him you hate from hell—
An evangelical compassion—with
Your own gold too!

Sieg. Father, 't is not my gold.

Prior. Whose then? You said it was no legacy.

Sieg. No matter whose—of this be sure, that he
Who own'd it never more will need it, save
In that which it may purchase from your altars:
'T is yours, or theirs.

Prior. Is there no blood upon it?

Sieg. No; but there's worse than blood—eternal
shame!

Prior. Did he who own'd it die in his *bed*?

Sieg.

Alas!

He did.

Prior. Son! you relapse into revenge,
If you regret your enemy's bloodless death.

Sieg. His death was fathomlessly deep in 'blood.

Prior. You said he died in his bed, not battle.

Sieg.

He

Died, I scarce know—but—he was stabb'd i' the dark.

And now you have it—perish'd on his pillow

By a cut-throat!—Ay!—you may look upon me!

I am *not* the man. I'll meet your eye on that point.

As I can one day God's.

Prior.

Nor did he die

By means, or men, or instrument of yours?

Sieg. No! by the God who sees and strikes!

Prior.

Nor know you

Who slew him?

Sieg.

I could only guess at *one*,

And he to me a stranger, unconnected,

As unemploy'd. Except by one day's knowledge,

I never saw the man who was suspected.

Prior. Then you are free from guilt.

Sieg. (eagerly).

Oh! *am* I?—say!

Prior. You have said so, and know best.

Sieg.

Father! I have spoken

The truth, and nought but truth, if *not* the *whole*;

Yet say I am *not* guilty! for the blood

Of this man weighs on me, as if I shed it,

Though, by the Power who abhorreth human blood,

I did not!—nay, once spared it, when I might

And *could*—ay, perhaps, *should* (if our self-safety

Be e'er excusable in such defences

Against the attacks of over-potent foes):

But pray for him, for me, and all my house;

For, as I said, though I be innocent,

I know not why, a like remorse is on me,

As if he had fallen by me or mine. Pray for me,

Father! I have pray'd myself in vain.

Prior.

I will.

Be comforted! You are innocent, and should

Be calm as innocence.

Sieg.

But calmness is not

Always the attribute of innocence.

I feel it is not.

Prior. But it will be so,
When the mind gathers up its truth within it.
Remember the great festival to-morrow,
In which you rank amidst our chiefest nobles,
As well as your brave son; and smooth your aspect,
Nor in the general orison of thanks
For bloodshed stopt, let blood you shed not rise
A cloud upon your thoughts. This were to be
Too sensitive. Take comfort, and forget
Such things, and leave remorse unto the guilty.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*A large and magnificent Gothic Hall in the Castle of Sigendorf, decorated with Trophies, Banners, and Arms of that family.*

Enter ARNHEIM and MEISTER, Attendants of COUNT SIEGENDORF.

Arn. Be quick! the count will soon return: the ladies Already are at the portal. Have you sent The messengers in search of him he seeks for?

Meis. I have, in all directions, over Prague,
As far as the man's dress and figure could
By your description track him. The devil take
These revels and processions! All the pleasure
(If such there be) must fall to the spectators.
I'm sure none doth to us who make the show.

Arn. Go to! my lady countess comes.

Meis. I'd rather
Ride a day's hunting on an outworn jade,
Than follow in the train of a great man,
In these dull pageantries.

Arn. Begone! and rail
Within.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter the COUNTESS JOSEPHINE SIEGENDORF and IDA STRALFNHEIM.

Jos. Well, Heaven be praised! the show is over.

Ida. How can you say so? Never have I dreamt

Of aught so beautiful. The flowers, the boughs
 The banners, and the nobles, and the knights,
 The gems, the robes, the plumes, the happy faces,
 The coursers, and the incense, and the sun
 Streaming through the stain'd windows, even the *tombs*,
 Which look'd so calm, and the celestial hymns,
 Which seem'd as if they rather came from heaven
 Than mounted there. The bursting organ's peal
 Rolling on high like an harmonious thunder;
 The white robes and the lifted eyes; the world
 At peace! and all at peace with one another!
 Oh, my sweet mother! [*Embracing* JOSEPHINE.

Jos. My beloved child!
 For such, I trust, thou shalt be shortly.

Ida. Oh!
 I am so already. Feel how my heart beats!

Jos. It does, my love; and never may it throb
 With aught more bitter.

Ida. Never shall it do so!
 How should it? What should make us grieve? I hate
 To hear of sorrow: how can we be sad,
 Who love each other so entirely? You,
 The count, and Ulric, and your daughter Ida.

Jos. Poor child!

Ida. Do you pity me?

Jos. No: I but envy,
 And that in sorrow, not in the world's sense
 Of the universal vice, if one vice be
 More general than another.

Ida. I'll not hear
 A word against a world which still contains
 You and my Ulric. Did you ever see
 Aught like him? How he tower'd amongst them all!
 How all eyes follow'd him! The flowers fell faster—
 Rain'd from each lattice at his feet, methought
 Than before all the rest; and where he trod
 I dare be sworn that they grow still, nor e'er
 Will wither.

Jos. You will spoil him, little flatterer,
 If he should hear you.

Ida. But he never will.
 I dare not say so much to him—I fear him.

Jos. Why so? he loves you well.

Ida. But I can never
Shape my thoughts of him into words to him :
Besides, he sometimes frightens me.

Jos. How so ?

Ida. A cloud comes o'er his blue eyes suddenly,
Yet he says nothing.

Jos. It is nothing : all men,
Especially in these dark troublous times,
Have much to think of.

Ida. But I cannot think
Of aught save him.

Jos. Yet there are other men,
In the world's eye, as goodly. There's, for instance,
The young Count Waldorf, who scarce once withdrew
His eyes from yours to-day.

Ida. I did not see him,
But Ulric. Did you not see at the moment
When all knelt, and I wept ? and yet methought,
Through my fast tears, though they were thick and warm,
I saw him smiling on me.

Jos. I could not
See aught save heaven, to which my eyes were raised,
Together with the people's.

Ida. I thought too
Of heaven, although I look'd on Ulric.

Jos. Come,
Let us retire ! they will be here anon
Expectant of the banquet. We will lay
Aside these nodding plumes and dragging trains.

Ida. And, above all, these stiff and heavy jewels,
Which made my head and heart ache, as both throb
Beneath their glitter o'er my brow and zone.
Dear mother, I am with you.

Enter COUNT SIEGENDORF, *in full dress, from the*
solemnity, and LUDWIG.

Sieg. Is he not found ?

Lud. Strict search is making everywhere ; and if
The man be in Prague, be sure he will be found.

Sieg. Where's Ulric ?

Lud. He rode round the other way
With some young nobles ; but he left them soon ;
And, if I err not, not a minute since

I heard his excellency, with his train,
Gallop o'er the west drawbridge.

Enter ULRIC, splendidly dressed.

Sieg. (to LUDWIG). See they cease not
Their quest of him I have described. [*Exit LUDWIG.*
Oh, Ulric!

How have I long'd for thee!

Ulr. Your wish is granted—
Behold me!

Sieg. I have seen the murderer.

Ulr. Whom? Where?

Sieg. The Hungarian, who slew Stralenheim.

Ulr. You dream.

Sieg. I live! and as I live, I saw him—
Heard him! he dared to utter even my name.

Ulr. What name?

Sieg. Werner! 't was mine.

Ulr. It must be so

No more: forget it.

Sieg. Never! never! all
My destinies were woven in that name:
It will not be engraved upon my tomb,
But it may lead me there.

Ulr. To the point—the Hungarian?

Sieg. Listen!—The church was throng'd: the hymn
was raised;

"*Te Deum*" peal'd from nations rather than
From choirs, in one great city of "God be praised"
For one day's peace, after thrice ten dread years,
Each bloodier than the former: I arose,
With all the nobles, and as I look'd down
Along the lines of lifted faces,—from
Our banner'd and escutcheon'd gallery, I
Saw, like a flash of lightning (for I saw
A moment and no more), what struck me sightless
To all else—the Hungarian's face! I grew
Sick; and when I recover'd from the mist
Which curl'd about my senses, and again
Look'd down, I saw him not. The thanksgiving
Was over, and we march'd back in procession.

Ulr. Continue.

Sieg. When we reach'd the Muldau's bridge.

The joyous crowd above, the numberless
 Barks mann'd with revellers in their best garbs,
 Which shot along the glancing tide below,
 The decorated street, the long array,
 The clashing music, and the thundering
 Of far artillery, which seem'd to bid
 A long and loud farewell to its great doings,
 The standards o'er me, and the tramlings round,
 The roar of rushing thousands,—all—all could not
 Chase this man from my mind, although my senses
 No longer held him palpable.

Ulr. You saw him
 No more, then?

Sieg. I look'd, as a dying soldier
 Looks at a draught of water, for this man ;
 But still I saw him not ; but in his stead——

Ulr. What in his stead?

Sieg. My eye for ever fell
 Upon your dancing crest ; the loftiest,
 As on the loftiest and the loveliest head,
 It rose the highest of the stream of plumes,
 Which overflow'd the glittering streets of Prague.

Ulr. What's this to the Hungarian?

Sieg. Much ; for I
 Had almost then forgot him in my son ;
 When just as the artillery ceased, and paused
 The music, and the crowd embraced in lieu
 Of shouting, I heard in a deep, low voice,
 Distinct and keener far upon my ear
 Than the late cannon's volume, this word——“ *Werner!*”

Ulr. Utter'd by——

Sieg. HIM ! I turn'd—and saw—and fell.

Ulr. And wherefore? Were you seen?

Sieg. The officious care
 Of those around me dragg'd me from the spot,
 Seeing my faintness, ignorant of the cause :
 You, too, were too remote in the procession
 (The old nobles being divided from their children)
 To aid me.

Ulr. But I'll aid you now.

Sieg. In what?

Ulr. In searching for this man, or——When he's found,
 What shall we do with him?

Sieg. I know not that.

Ulr. Then wherefore seek?

Sieg. Because I cannot rest
Till he is found. His fate, and Stralenheim's,
And ours, seem interwisted! nor can be
Unravell'd, till——

Enter an ATTENDANT.

Atten. A stranger to wait on
Your excellency.

Sieg. Who?

Atten. He gave no name.

Sieg. Admit him, ne'ertheless.

[*The ATTENDANT introduces GABOR, and afterwards exit.*

Ah!

Gab. 'Tis then Werner!
Sieg. (haughtily). The same you knew, sir, by that
name; and you!

Gab. (looking round). I recognise you both: father and
son,

It seems. Count, I have heard that you, or yours,
Have lately been in search of me: I am here.

Sieg. I've sought you, and have found you: you are
charged

(Your own heart may inform you why) with such
A crime as—— [*He pauses.*

Gab. Give it utterance, and then
I'll meet the consequences.

Sieg. You shall do so—
Unless——

Gab. First, who accuses me?

Sieg. All things,
If not all men: the universal rumour—
My own presence on the spot—the place—the time—
And every speck of circumstance unite
To fix the blot on you.

Gab. And on *me only*?
Pause ere you answer: is no other name
Save mine, stain'd in this business?

Sieg. Trifling villain!
Who play'st with thine own guilt! Of all that breathe
Thou best dost know the innocence of him
'Gainst whom thy breath would blow thy bloody slander.

But I will talk no further with a wretch,
Further than justice asks. Answer at once,
And without quibbling, to my charge.

Gab. 'T is false !

Sieg. Who says so ?

Gab. I .

Sieg. And how disprove it ?

Gab. By

The presence of the murderer.

Sieg. Name him.

Gab. He

May have more names than one. Your lordship had so
Once on a time.

Sieg. If you mean me, I dare
Your utmost.

Gab. You may do so, and in safety ;
I know the assassin.

Sieg. Where is he ?

Gab. (*pointing to ULRIC*). Beside you !

[*ULRIC rushes forward to attack GABOR ; SIEGENDORF interposes.*

Sieg. Liar and fiend ! but you shall not be slain ;
These walls are mine, and you are safe within them.

[*He turns to ULRIC.*

Ulric, repel this calumny, as I

Will do. I avow it is a growth so monstrous,

I could not deem it earth-born : but be calm ;

It will refute itself. But touch him not.

[*ULRIC endeavours to compose himself.*

Gab. Look at him, count, and then hear me.

Sieg. (*first to GABOR, and then looking at ULRIC*).

I hear thee.

My God ! you look——

Ulr. How ?

Sieg. As on that dread night

When we met in the garden.

Ulr. (*composes himself*). It is nothing.

Gab. Count, you are bound to hear me. I came hither
Not seeking you, but sought. When I knelt down
Amidst the people in the church, I dream'd not
To find the beggar'd Werner in the seat
Of senators and princes ; but you have call'd me,
And we have met.

Sieg.

Go on, sir.

Gab.

Ere I do so,

Allow me to inquire, who profited
By Stralenheim's death? Was 't I—as poor as ever;
And poorer by suspicion on my name!
The baron lost in that last outrage neither
Jewels nor gold; his life alone was sought,—
A life which stood between the claims of others
To honours and estates scarce less than princely.

Sieg. These hints, as vague as vain, attach no less
To me than to my son.

Gab.

I can't help that.

But let the consequence alight on him
Who feels himself the guilty one among us.
I speak to you, Count Siegendorf, because
I know you innocent, and deem you just.
But ere I can proceed—*dare* you protect me?
Dare you command me?

[SIEGENDORF first looks at the Hungarian, and then
at ULRIC, who has unbuckled his sabre, and is
drawing lines with it on the floor—still in its sheath.

Ulr. (*looks at his father and says*), Let the man go on!

Gab. I am unarm'd, count—bid your son lay down
His sabre.

Ulr. (*offers it to him contemptuously*). Take it.

Gab.

No, sir, 't is enough

That we are both unarm'd—I would not choose
To wear a steel which may be stain'd with more
Blood than came there in battle.

Ulr. (*casts the sabre from him in contempt*). It—or some
Such other weapon, in my hand—spared yours
Once, when disarm'd and at my mercy.

Gab.

True—

I have not forgotten it: you spared me for
Your own especial purpose—to sustain
An ignominy not my own.

Ulr.

Proceed.

The tale is doubtless worthy the relater,
But is it of my father to hear further? [To SIEGENDORF.

Sieg. (*takes his son by the hand*). My son, I know my
own innocence, and doubt not

Of yours—but I have promised this man patience:
Let him continue.

Gab. I will not detain you,
 By speaking of myself much : I began
 Life early—and am what the world has made me.
 At Frankfort on the Oder, where I pass'd
 A winter in obscurity, it was
 My chance at several places of resort
 (Which I frequented sometimes, but not often)
 To hear related a strange circumstance
 In February last. A martial force,
 Sent by the state, had, after strong resistance,
 Secured a band of desperate men, supposed
 Marauders from the hostile camp.—They proved,
 However, not to be so—but banditti,
 Whom either accident or enterprise
 Had carried from their usual haunt—the forests
 Which skirt Bohemia—even into Lusatia.
 Many amongst them were reported of
 High rank—and martial law slept for a time.
 At last they were escorted o'er the frontiers,
 And placed beneath the civil jurisdiction
 Of the free town of Frankfort. Of *their* fate
 I know no more.

Sieg. And what is this to Ulric?

Gab. Amongst them there was said to be one man
 Of wonderful endowments :—birth and fortune,
 Youth, strength, and beauty, almost superhuman,
 And courage as unrivall'd, were proclaim'd
 His by the public rumour ; and his sway,
 Not only over his associates, but
 His judges, was attributed to witchcraft,
 Such was his influence :—I have no great faith
 In any magic save that of the mine—
 I therefore deem'd him wealthy.—But my soul
 Was roused with various feelings to seek out
 This prodigy, if only to behold him.

Sieg. And did you so?

Gab. You'll hear. Chance favour'd me :
 A popular affray in the public square
 Drew crowds together—it was one of those
 Occasions where men's souls look out of them,
 And show them as they are—even in their faces :
 The moment my eye met his, I exclaim'd,
 "This is the man !" though he was then, as since,

With the nobles of the city. I felt sure
 I had not err'd, and watch'd him long and nearly ;
 I noted down his form—his gesture—features,
 Stature, and bearing—and amidst them all,
 'Midst every natural and acquired distinction,
 I could discern, methought, the assassin's eye
 And gladiator's heart.

Ulr. (smiling). The tale sounds well.

Gab. And may sound better.—He appear'd to me
 One of those beings to whom Fortune bends,
 As she doth to the daring—and on whom
 The fates of others oft depend ; besides,
 An indescribable sensation drew me
 Near to this man, as if my point of fortune
 Was to be fix'd by him —There I was wrong.

Sieg. And may not be right now.

Gab. I follow'd him,
 Solicited his notice—and obtain'd it—
 Though not his friendship :—it was his intention
 To leave the city privately—we left it
 Together—and together we arrived
 In the poor town where Werner was conceal'd,
 And Stralenheim was succour'd—Now we are on
 The verge—*dare* you hear further?

Sieg. I must do so—
 Or I have heard too much.

Gab. I saw in you
 A man above his station—and if not
 So high, as now I find you, in my then
 Conceptions, 't was that I had rarely seen
 Men such as you appear'd in height of mind,
 In the most high of worldly rank ; you were
 Poor, even to all save rags : I would have shared
 My purse, though slender, with you—you refused it.

Sieg. Doth my refusal make a debt to you,
 That thus you urge it?

Gab. Still you owe me something,
 Though not for that ; and I owed you my safety,
 At least my seeming safety, when the slaves
 Of Stralenheim persuad me on the grounds
 That I had robb'd him.

Sieg. I conceal'd you—I,
 'Whom and whose house you arraign, reviving viper !

Gab. I accuse no man—save in my defence.
 You, count, have made yourself accuser—judge:
 Your hall's my court, your heart is my tribunal.
 Be just, and *I'll* be merciful!

Sieg. You merciful?—
 You! Base calumniator!

Gab. I. 'T will rest
 With me at last to be so. You conceal'd me—
 In secret passages known to yourself,
 You said, and to none else. At dead of night,
 Weary with watching in the dark, and dubious
 Of tracing back my way, I saw a glimmer,
 Through distant crannies, of a twinkling light:
 I follow'd it, and reach'd a door—a secret
 Portal—which open'd to the chamber, where,
 With cautious hand and slow, having first undone
 As much as made a crevice of the fastening,
 I look'd through and beheld a purple bed,
 And on it Stralen! eim!—

Sieg. Asleep! And yet
 You slew him!—Wretch!

Gab. He was already slain,
 And bleeding like a sacrifice. My own
 Blood became ice.

Sieg. But he was all alone!
 You saw none else? You did not see the——

[*He pauses from agitation.*

Gab. No,
He, whom you dare not name, nor even I
 Scarce dare to recollect, was not then in
 The chamber.

Sieg. (to ULRIC). Then, my boy! thou art guiltless
 still—

Thou bad'st me say *I* was so once—Oh, now
 Do thou as much!

Gab. Be patient! I can *not*
 Recede now, though it shake the very walls
 Which frown above us. You remember,—or
 If not, your son does,—that the locks were changed
 Beneath *his* chief inspection on the morn
 Which led to this same night: how he had enter'd
 He best knows—but within an antechamber,
 The door of which was half ajar, I saw

A man who wash'd his bloody hands, and oft
With stern and anxious glance gazed back upon
The bleeding body—but it moved no more.

Sieg. Oh ! God of father's !

Gab.

I beheld his features

As I see yours—but yours they were not, though
Resembling them—behold them in Count Ulric's !
Distinct as I beheld them though the expression
Is not now what it then was !—but it was so
When I first charged him with the crime—so lately.

Sieg. This is so—

Gab. (interrupting him). Nay—but hear me to the end !

Now you must do so.—I conceived myself
Betray'd by you and *him* (for now I saw
There was some tie between you) into this
Pretended den of refuge, to become
The victim of your guilt ; and my first thought
Was vengeance : but, though arm'd with a short poniard
(Having left my sword without), I was no match
For him at any time, as had been proved
That morning—either in address or force.
I turn'd and tied—i' the dark : chance rather than
Skill made me gain the secret door of the hall,
And thence the chamber where you slept : if I
Had found you *waking*, Heaven alone can tell
What vengeance and suspicion might have prompted ;
But ne'er slept guilt as Werner slept that night.

Sieg. And yet I had horrid dreams ! and such brief
sleep,

The stars had not gone down when I awoke.
Why didst thou spare me ? I dreamt of my father—
And now my dream is out !

Gab.

'T is not my fault,

If I have read it.—Well ! I fled and hid me—
Chance led me here after so many moons—
And show'd me Werner in Count Siegendorf !
Werner, whom I had sought in huts in vain,
Inhabited the palace of a sovereign !
You sought me and have found me—now you know
My secret, and may weigh its worth.

Sieg. (after a pause).

Indeed !

Gab. Is it revenge or justice which inspires
Your meditation ?

Sieg. Neither—I was weighing
The value of your secret.

Gab. You shall know it
At once :—When you were poor, and I, though poor,
Rich enough to relieve such poverty
As might have envied mine, I offer'd you
My purse—you would not share it :—I'll be franker
With you : you are wealthy, noble, trusted by
The imperial powers—you understand me ?

Sieg. Yes.

Gab. Not quite. You think me venal, and scarce true :
'T is no less true, however, that my fortunes
Have made me both at present. You shall aid me :
I would have aided you—and also have
Been somewhat damaged in my name to save
Yours and your son's. Weigh well what I have said.

Sieg. Dare you await the event of a few minutes'
Deliberation ?

Gab. (*casts his eyes on ULRIC, who is leaning against a pillar*). If I should do so ?

Sieg. I pledge my life for yours. Withdraw into
This tower. [*Opens a turret door.*

Gab. (*hesitatingly*). This is the second safe asylum
You've offer'd me.

Sieg. And was not the first so ?

Gab. I know not that even now—but will approve
The second. I have still a further shield.—
I did not enter Prague alone ; and should I
Be put to rest with Stralenheim, there are
Some tongues without will wag in my behalf.
Be brief in your decision !

Sieg. I will be so.—
My word is sacred and irrevocable
Within *these* walls, but it extends no further.

Gab. I'll take it for so much.

Sieg. (*points to ULRIC'S sabre, still upon the ground*).
Take also *that*—

I saw you eye it eagerly, and him
Distrustfully.

Gab. (*takes up the sabre*). I will ; and so provide
To sell my life—not cheaply.

[GABOR goes into the turret, which SIEGENDORF closes.

Sieg. (*advances to ULRIC*). Now, Count Ulric !

For son I dare not call thee—What say'st thou?

Ulr. His tale is true.

Sieg. True, monster!

Ulr. Most true, father!

And you did well to listen to it: what

We know, we can provide against. He must
Be silenced.

Sieg. Ay, with half of my domains;
And with the other half, could he and thou
Unsay this villainy.

Ulr. It is no time
For trifling or dissembling. I have said
His story's true; and he too must be silenced.

Sieg. How so?

Ulr. As Stralenheim is. Are you so dull
As never to have hit on this before?
When we met in the garden, what except
Discovery in the act could make me know
His death? Or had the prince's household been
Then summon'd, would the cry for the police
Been left to such a stranger? Or should I
Have loiter'd on the way? Or could *you, Werner*,
The object of the baron's hate and fears,
Have fled, unless by many an hour before
Suspicion woke? I sought and fathom'd you,
Doubting if you were false or feeble: I
Perceived you were the latter: and yet so
Confiding have I found you, that I doubted
At times your weakness.

Sieg. Parricide! no less
Than common stabber! What deed of my life,
Or thought of mine, could make you deem me fit
For your accomplice?

Ulr. Father, do not raise
The devil you cannot lay between us. This
Is time for union and for action, not
For family disputes. While *you* were tortured,
Could *I* be calm? Think you that I have heard
This fellow's tale without some feeling?—You
Have taught me feeling for *you* and myself;
For whom or what else did you ever teach it?

Sieg. Oh! my dead father's curse! 't is working now.

Ulr. Let it work on ! the grave will keep it down !
Ashes are feeble foes : it is more easy
To baffle such, than countermine a mole,
Which winds its blind but living path beneath you.
Yet hear me still !—If *you* condemn me, yet
Remember *who* hath taught me once too often
To listen to him ! *Who* proclaim'd to me
That *there were crimes* made venial by the occasion ?
That passion was our nature ? that the goods
Of Heaven waited on the goods of fortune ?
Who show'd me his humanity secured
By his *nerves* only ? *Who* deprived me of
All power to vindicate myself and race
In open day ? By his disgrace which stamp'd
(It might be) bastardy on me, and on
Himself—a *felon's* brand ! The man who is
At once both warm and weak invites to deeds
He longs to do, but dare not. Is it strange
That I should *act* what you could *think* ? We have done
With right and wrong : and now must only ponder
Upon effects, not causes. Stralenheim,
Whose life I saved from impulse, as, *unknown*,
I would have saved a peasant's or a dog's, I slew
Known as our foe—but not from vengeance. He
Was a rock in our way which I cut through,
As doth the bolt, because it stood between us
And our true destination—but not idly.
As stranger I preserved him, and he *owed me*
His *life* : when due, I but resumed the debt.
He, you, and I stood o'er a gulf wherein
I have plung'd our enemy. *You* kindled first
The torch—*you* show'd the path : now trace me that
Of safety—or let me !

Sieg. I have done with life !

Ulr. Let us have done with that which cankers life—
Familiar feuds and vain recriminations
Of things which cannot be undone. We have
No more to learn or hide : I know no fear,
And have within these very walls men who
(Although you know them not) dare venture all things.
You stand high with the state ; what passes here
Will not excite her too great curiosity :

Keep your own secret, keep a steady eye,
 Stir not, and speak not;—leave the rest to me :
 We must have no *third* babblers thrust between us.

[Exit ULRIC.]

Sieg. (solus). Am I awake? are these my fathers' halls?
 And *you*—my son? *My* son! *mine*! who have ever
 Abhor'd both mystery and blood, and yet
 Am plunged into the deepest hell of both!
 I must be speedy, or more will be shed—
 The Hungarian's!—Ulric—he hath partisans,
 It seems: I might have guess'd as much. Oh fool!
 Wolves prowl in company. He hath the key
 (As I too) of the opposite door which leads
 Into the turret. Now then! or once more
 To be the father of fresh crimes, no less
 Than of the criminal! Ho! Gabor! Gabor!

[Exit into the turret, closing the door after him.]

SCENE II.

The Interior of the Turret.

GABOR and SIEGENDORF.

Gab. Who calls?

Sieg. I—Siegendorf! Take these and fly!
 Lose not a moment!

[Tears off a diamond star and other jewels, and thrusts
 them into GABOR'S hand.]

Gab. What am I to do
 With these?

Sieg. Whate'er you will: sell them, or hoard,
 And prosper; but delay not, or you are lost!

Gab. You pledged your honour for my safety!

Sieg. And
 Must thus redeem it. Fly! I am not master,
 It seems, of my own castle—of my own
 Retainers—nay, even of these very walls,
 Or I would bid them fall and crush me! Fly!
 Or you will be slain by——

Gab. Is it even so?
 Farewell, then! Recollect, however, count,
 You sought this fatal interview!

Sieg. I did:
 Let it not be more fatal still!—Begone!

Gab. By the same path I enter'd?

Sieg. Yes; that's safe still;
But loiter not in Prague;—you do not know
With whom you have to deal.

Gab. I know too well—
And knew it ere yourself, unhappy sire!
Farewell!

[*Exit GABOR.*

Sieg. (solus and listening). He hath clear'd the staircase.

Ah! I hear

The door sound loud behind him! He is safe!
Safe!—Oh, my father's spirit!—I am faint—

[*He leans down upon a stone seat, near the wall of the tower, in a drooping posture.*

Enter ULRIC, with others armed, and with weapons drawn.

Ulr. Despatch!—he's there!

Lud. The count, my lord!

Ulr. (recognising SIEGENDORF). You here, sir!

Sieg. Yes; if you want another victim, strike!

Ulr. (seeing him stript of his jewels). Where is the
ruffian who hath plunder'd you?

Vassals, despatch in search of him! You see
'T was as I said—the wretch hath stript my father
Of jewels which might form a prince's heirloom!
Away! I'll follow you forthwith.

[*Exeunt all but SIEGENDORF and ULRIC.*
What's this?

Where is the villain?

Sieg. There are *two*, sir: which

Are you in quest of?

Ulr. Let us hear no more

Of this: he must be found. You have not let him
Escape?

Sieg. He's gone.

Ulr. With your connivance!

Sieg. With

My fullest, freest aid.

Ulr. Then fare you well!

[*ULRIC is going.*

Sieg. Stop! I command—entreat—implore! Oh, Ulric!
Will you then leave me?

Ulr. What! remain to be

Denounced—dragg'd, it may be, in chains; and all

By your inherent weakness, half-humanity,
Selfish remorse, and temporising pity,
That sacrifices your whole race to save
A wretch to profit by our ruin! No, count,
Henceforth you have no son!

Sieg. I never had one;
And would you ne'er had borne the useless name!
Where will you go? I would not send you forth
Without protection.

Ulr. Leave that unto me.
I am not alone; nor merely the vain heir
Of your domains; a thousand, ay, ten thousand
Swords, hearts, and hands are mine.

Sieg. The foresters!
With whom the Hungarian found you first at Frankfort!

Ulr. Yes—men—who are worthy of the name! Go
Your senators that they look well to Prague; [tell
Their feast of peace was early for the times;
There are more spirits abroad than have been laid
With Wallenstein!

Enter JOSEPHINE and IDA.

Jos. What is 't we hear? My Siegendorf!
Thank Heaven, I see you safe!

Sieg. Safe!

Ida. Yes, dear father!

Sieg. No, no; I have no children: never more
Call me by that worst name of parent.

Jos. What
Means my good lord?

Sieg. That you have given birth
To a demon!

Ida. (taking ULRIC'S hand). Who shall dare say this
of Ulríc?

Sieg. Ida, beware! there's blood upon that hand.

Ida. (stooping to kiss it). I'd kiss it off, though it were
mine.

Sieg. It is so!

Ulr. Away! it is your father's! [Exit ULRIC.

Ida. Oh, great God!

And I have loved this man!

[IDA falls senseless—] JOSEPHINE stands speechless with
horror.

Sieg. The wretch hath slain
 Them both!—My Josephine! we are now alone!
 Would we had ever been so!—All is over
 For me!—Now open wide, my sire, thy grave;
 Thy curse hath dug it deeper for thy son
 In mine!—The race of Siegendorf is past!

THE DEFORMED TRANSFORMED:

A DRAMA.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THIS production is founded partly on the story of a novel called "The Three Brothers," published many years ago, from which M. G. Lewis's "Wood Demon" was also taken; and partly on the "Faust" of the great Goethe. The present publication contains the two first Parts only, and the opening chorus of the third. The rest may perhaps appear hereafter.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

STRANGER, afterwards CÆSAR.
 ARNOLD.
 BOURBON.
 PHILIBERT.

CELLINI.
 BERTHA.
 OLIMPIA.

Spirits, Soldiers, Citizens of Rome, Priests, Peasants, &c.

PART I.

SCENE I.—*A Forest.*

Enter ARNOLD *and his mother* BERTHA.

Bert. OUT, hunchback!

Arn.

I was born so, mother!

Bert.

Thou incubus! Thou nightmare! Of seven sons,
 The sole abortion!

Out,

Arn. Would that I had been so,
And never seen the light !

Bert. I would so too !
But as thou *hast*—hence, hence—and do thy best !
That back of thine may bear its burden : 't is
More high, if not so broad as that of others.

Arn. It *bears* its burthen ;—but, my heart ! will it
Sustain that which you lay upon it, mother ?
I love, or, at the least, I loved you : nothing
Save you, in nature, can love aught like me.
You nursed me—do not kill me !

Bert. Yes—I nursed thee,
Because thou wert my first-born, and I knew not
If there would be another unlike thee,
That monstrous sport of nature. But get hence,
And gather wood !

Arn. I will : but when I bring it,
Speak to me kindly. Though my brothers are
So beautiful and lusty, and as free
As the free chase they follow, do not spurn me ;
Our milk has been the same.

Bert. As is the hedgehog's,
Which sucks at midnight from the wholesome dam
Of the young bull, until the milkmaid finds
The nipple next day sore and udder dry.
Call not thy brothers brethren ! Call me not
Mother ; for if I brought thee forth, it was
As foolish hens at times hatch vipers, by
Sitting upon strange eggs. Out, urchin, out !

[*Exit BERTHA.*]

Arn. (solus). Oh, mother !—She is gone, and I
must do
Her bidding ;—wearily but willingly
I would fulfil it, could I only hope
A kind word in return. What shall I do ?

[*ARNOLD begins to cut wood : in doing this he wounds
one of his hands.*]

My labour for the day is over now.
Accursed be this blood that flows so fast ;
For double curses will be my meed now
At home—What home ? I have no home, no kin,
No kind—not made like other creatures, or
To share their sports or pleasures. Must I bleed, too,

Like them? Oh, that each drop which falls to earth
Would rise a snake to sting them, as they have stung
me!

Or that the devil, to whom they liken me,
Would aid his likeness! If I must partake
His form, why not his power? Is it because
I have not his will too? For one kind word
From her who bore me would still reconcile me
Even to this hateful aspect. Let me wash
The wound.

[ARNOLD goes to a spring, and stoops to wash his hand:
he starts back.

They are right! and Nature's mirror shows me
What she hath made me. I will not look on it
Again, and scarce dare think on 't. Hideous wretch
That I am! The very waters mock me with
My horrid shadow—like a demon placed
Deep in the fountain to scare back the cattle
From drinking therein.

[He pauses.

And shall I live on,
A burden to the earth, myself, and shame
Unto what brought me into life! Thou blood,
Which flow'st so freely from a scratch, let me
Try if thou wilt not in a fuller stream
Pour forth my woes for ever with thyself
On earth, to which I will restore at once
This hateful compound of her atoms, and
Resolve back to her elements, and take
The shape of any reptile save myself,
And make a world for myriads of new worms!
This knife! now let me prove if it will sever
This wither'd slip of nature's nightshade—my
Vile form—from the creation, as it hath
The green bough from the forest.

[ARNOLD places the knife in the ground, with the point
upwards.

Now 't is set,
And I can fall upon it. Yet one glance
On the fair day, which sees no foul thing like
Myself, and the sweet sun which warm'd me, but
In vain. The birds—how joyously they sing!
So let them, for I would not be lamented:
But let their merriest notes be Arnold's knell;

The fallen leaves my monument ; the murmur
Of the near fountain my sole elegy.

Now, knife, stand firmly, as I fain would fall !

*[As he rushes to throw himself upon the knife, his eye
is suddenly caught by the fountain, which seems in
motion.]*

The fountain moves without a wind : but shall

The ripple of a spring change my resolve ?

No. Yet it moves again ! The waters stir,

Not as with air, but by some subterrane

And rocking power of the internal world.

What's here ? A mist ! No more ?—

*[A cloud comes from the fountain. He stands gazing
upon it : it is dispelled, and a tall black man comes
towards him.]*

Arn.

What would you ? Speak !

Spirit or man ?

Stran.

As man is both, why not

Say both in one ?

Arn.

Your form is man's, and yet

You may be devil.

Stran.

So many men are that

Which is so call'd or thought, that you may add me

To which you please, without much wrong to either.

But come : you wish to kill yourself ;—pursue

Your purpose.

Arn.

You have interrupted me.

Stran. What is that resolution which can e'er

Be interrupted ? If I be the devil

You deem, a single moment would have made you

Mine, and for ever, by your suicide ;

And yet my coming saves you.

Arn.

I said not

You *were* the demon, but that your approach

Was like one.

Stran.

Unless you keep company

With him (and you seem scarce used to such high

Society), you can't tell how he approaches ;

And for his aspect, look upon the fountain,

And then on me, and judge which of us twain

Looks likest what the boors believe to be

Their cloven-footed terror.

Arn. Do you—dare you
To taunt me with my born deformity?

Stran. Were I to taunt a buffalo with this
Cloven foot of thine, or the swift dromedary
With thy sublime of humps, the animals
Would revel in the compliment. And yet
Both beings are more swift, more strong, more mighty
In action and endurance than thyself,
And all the fierce and fair of the same kind
With thee. Thy form is natural: 't was only
Nature's mistaken largess to bestow
The gifts which are of others upon man.

Arn. Give me the strength then of the buffalo's foot,
When he spurs high the dust, beholding his
Near enemy; or let me have the long
And patient swiftness of the desert-ship,
The helmless dromedary!—and I'll bear
Thy fiendish sarcasm with a saintly patience.

Stran. I will.

Arn. (with surprise). Thou canst?

Stran. Perhaps. Would you aught else?

Arn. Thou mockest me.

Stran. Not I. Why should I mock
What all are mocking? That's poor sport, methinks.
To talk to thee in human language (for
Thou canst not yet speak mine), the forester
Hunts not the wretched coney, but the boar,
Or wolf, or lion, leaving paltry game
To petty burghers, who leave once a year
Their walls, to fill their household caldrons with
Such scullion prey. The meanest gibe at thee,—
Now I can mock the mightiest.

Arn. Then waste not
Thy time on me: I seek thee not.

Stran. Your thoughts
Are not far from me. Do not send me back:
I'm not so easily recall'd to do
Good service.

Arn. What wilt thou do for me?

Stran. Change
Shapes with you, if you will, since yours so irks you;
Or form you to your wish in any shape.

Arn. Oh ! then you are indeed the demon, for
Nought else would wittingly wear mine.

Stran. I'll show thee
The brightest which the world e'er bore, and give thee
Thy choice.

Arn. On what condition ?

Stran. There's a question !
An hour ago you would have given your soul
To look like other men, and now you pause
To wear the form of heroes.

Arn. No ; I will not.
I must not compromise my soul.

Stran. What soul,
Worth naming so, would dwell in such a carcass ?

Arn. 'T is an aspiring one, whate'er the tenement
In which it is mislodged. But name your compact :
Must it be sign'd in blood ?

Stran. Not in your own.

Arn. Whose blood then ?

Stran. We will talk of that hereafter.
But I'll be moderate with you, for I see
Great things within you. You shall have no bond
But your own will, no contract save your deeds.
Are you content ?

Arn. I take thee at thy word.

Stran. Now then !

[*The Stranger approaches the fountain, and turns to*
ARNOLD.

A little of your blood.

Arn. For what ?

Stran. To mingle with the magic of the waters,
And make the charm effective.

Arn. (*holding out his wounded arm*). Take it all.

Stran. Not now. A few drops will suffice for this.

[*The Stranger takes some of ARNOLD'S blood in his hand*
and casts it into the fountain.

Shadows of beauty !

Shadows of power !

Rise to your duty—

This is the hour !

Walk lovely and pliant

From the depth of this fountain,

As the cloud-shapen giant .
 Bestrides the Hartz Mountain.
 Come as ye were,
 That our eyes may behold
 The model in air
 Of the form I will mould,
 Bright as the Iris
 When ether is spann'd :—
 Such *his* desire is, [Pointing to ARNOLD.
 Such my command !
 Demons heroic—
 Demons who wore
 The form of the stoic
 Or sophist of yore—
 Or the shape of each victor,
 From Macedon's boy,
 To each high Roman's picture,
 Who breathed to destroy—
 Shadows of beauty !
 Shadows of power !
 Up to your duty—
 This is the hour !

[*Various phantoms arise from the waters, and pass in succession before the Stranger and ARNOLD.*

Arn. What do I see ?

Stran. The black-eyed Roman, with
 The eagle's beak between those eyes which ne'er
 Beheld a conqueror, or look'd along
 The land he made not Rome's while Rome became
 His, and all theirs who heir'd his very name.

Arn. The phantom's bald ; my quest is beauty. Could I
 Inherit but his fame with his defects !

Stran. His brow was girt with laurels more than hairs.
 You see his aspect—choose it, or reject.
 I can but promise you his form ; his fame
 Must be long sought and fought for.

Arn. I will fight, too,
 But not as a mock Cæsar. Let him pass ;
 His aspect may be fair, but suits me not.

Stran. Then you are far more difficult to please
 Than Cato's sister, or than Brutus's mother,
 Or Cleopatra at sixteen—an age

When love is not less in the eye than heart.

But be it so! Shadow, pass on!

[*The phantom of Julius Cæsar disappears.*]

Arn.

And can it

Be, that the man who shook the earth is gone,

And left no footstep?

Stran.

There you err. His substance

Left graves enough, and woes enough, and fame

More than enough to track his memory;

But for his shadow, 't is no more than yours,

Except a little longer and less crook'd

I' the sun. Behold another! [*A second phantom passes.*]

Arn.

Who is he?

Stran. He was the fairest and the bravest of
Athenians. Look upon him well.

Arn.

He is

More lovely than the last. How beautiful!

Stran. Such was the curled son of Clinias;—Wouldst
thou

Invest thee with his form?

Arn.

Would that I had

Been born with it! But since I may choose further,

I will look further. [*The shade of Alcibiades disappears.*]

Stran.

Lo! behold again!

Arn. What! that low, swarthy, short-nosed, round-eyed
satyr,

With the wide nostrils and Silenus' aspect,

The splay feet and low stature! I had better

Remain that which I am.

Stran.

And yet he was

The earth's perfection of all mental beauty,

And personification of all virtue.

But you reject him?

Arn.

If his form could bring me

That which redeem'd it—no.

Stran.

I have no power

To promise that; but you may try, and find it

Easier in such a form, or in your own.

Arn. No. I was not born for philosophy,

Though I have that about me which has need on't.

Let him fleet on.

Stran.

Be air, thou hemlock-drinker!

[*The shadow of Socrates disappears: another rises.*]

Arn. What's here? whose broad brow and whose curly
And manly aspect look like Hercules, [beard
Save that his jocund eye hath more of Bacchus
Than the sad purger of the infernal world,
Leaning dejected on his club of conquest,
As if he knew the worthlessness of those
For whom he had fought.

Stran. It was the man who lost
The ancient world for love.

Arn. I cannot blame him,
Since I have risk'd my soul because I find not
That which he exchanged the earth for.

Stran. Since so far
You seem congenial, will you wear his features?

Arn. No. As you leave me choice, I am difficult,
If but to see the heroes I should ne'er
Have seen else on this side of the dim shore
Whence they float black before us.

Stran. Hence, triumvir,
Thy Cleopatra's waiting.

[*The shade of Antony disappears: another rises.*

Arn. Who is this?
Who truly looketh like a demigod,
Blooming and bright, with golden hair, and stature,
If not more high than mortal, yet immortal
In all that nameless bearing of his limbs,
Which he wears as the sun his rays—a something
Which shines from him, and yet is but the flashing
Emanation of a thing more glorious still.
Was he *é crâ human* only?

Stran. Let the earth speak,
If there be atoms of him left, or even
Of the more solid gold that form'd his urn.

Arn. Who was this glory of mankind?

Stran. The shame
Of Greece in peace, her thunderbolt in war—
Demetrius the Macedonian, and
Taker of cities.

Arn. Yet one shadow more.

Stran. (*addressing the shadow*). Get thee to Lamia's lap!

[*The shade of Demetrius Poliorcetes vanishes: another rises.*

I'll fit you still,

Fear not, my hunchback : if the shadows of
That which existed please not your nice taste,
I'll animate the ideal marble, till
Your soul be reconciled to her new garment.

Arn. Content ! I will fix here.

Stran. I must commend
Your choice. The god-like son of the sea-godde-s,
The unshorn boy of Peleus, with his locks
As beautiful and clear as the amber waves
Of rich Pactolus, roll'd o'er sands of gold,
Softened by intervening crystal, and
Rippled like flowing waters by the wind,
All vow'd to Sperchius as they were—behold them !
And *him*—as he stood by Polixena,
With sanction'd and with soften'd love, before
The altar, gazing on his Trojan bride,
With some remorse within for Hector slain
And Priam weeping, mingled with deep passion
For the sweet downcast virgin, whose young hand
Trembled in *his* who slew her brother. So
He stood i' the temple ! Look upon him as
Greece look'd her last upon her best, the instant
Ere Paris' arrow flew.

Arn. I gaze upon him
As if I were his soul, whose form shall soon
Envelope mine.

Stran. You have done well. The greatest
Deformity should only barter with
The extremest beauty, if the proverb's true
Of mortals, that extremes meet.

Arn. Come ! Be quick !
I am impatient.

Stran. As a youthful beauty
Before her glass. *You both* see what is not,
But dream it is what must be.

Arn. Must I wait ?

Stran. No ; that were a pity. But a word or two :
His stature is twelve cubits ; would you so far
Outstep these times, and be a Titan ? Or
(To talk canonically) wax a son
Of Anak ?

Arn. Why not ?

Stran. Glorious ambition !

I love thee most in dwarfs ! A mortal of
Philistine stature would have gladly pared
His own Goliath down to a slight David :
But thou, my manikin, wouldst soar a show
Rather than hero. Thou shalt be indulged,
If such be thy desire ; and yet, by being
A little less removed from present men
In figure, thou canst sway them more ; for all
Would rise against thee now, as if to hunt
A new-found mammoth : and their cursed engines,
Their culverins, and so forth, would find way
Through our friend's armour there, with greater ease
Than the adulterer's arrow through his heel,
Which Thetis had forgotten to baptize
In Styx.

Arn. Then let it be as thou deem'st best.

Stran. Thou shalt be beauteous as the thing thou seest,
And strong as what it was, and——

Arn. I ask not
For valour, since deformity is daring.
It is its essence to o'ertake mankind
By heart and soul, and make itself the equal—
Ay, the superior of the rest. There is
A spur in its halt movements, to become
All that the others cannot, in such things
As still are free to both, to compensate
For stepdame Nature's avarice at first.
They woo with fearless deeds the smiles of fortune,
And oft, like Timour the lame Tartar, win them.

Stran. Well spoken ! and thou doubtless wilt remain
Form'd as thou art. I may dismiss the mould
Of shadow, which must turn to flesh, to incase
This daring soul, which could achieve no less
Without it.

Arn. Had no power presented me
The possibility of change, I would
Have done the best which spirit may to make
Its way with all deformity's dull, deady
Discouraging weight upon me, like a mountain,
In feeling, on my heart as on my shoulders—
A hateful and unsightly molehill, to
The eyes of happier men. I would have look'd
On beauty in that sex which is the type

Of all we know or dream of beautiful
 Beyond the world they brighten, with a sigh—
 Not of love, but despair; nor sought to win,
 Though to a heart all love, what could not love me
 In turn, because of this vile crooked clog,
 Which makes me lonely. Nay, I could have borne
 It all, had not my mother spurn'd me from her.
 The she-bear licks her cubs into a sort
 Of shape;—my dam beheld my shape was hopeless.
 Had she exposed me, like the Spartan, ere
 I knew the passionate part of life, I had
 Been a clod of the valley,—happier nothing
 Than what I am. But even thus, the lowest,
 Ugliest, and meanest of mankind, what courage
 And perseverance could have done, perchance
 Had made me something—as it has made heroes
 Of the same mould as mine. You lately saw me
 Master of my own life, and quick to quit it;
 And he who is so is the master of
 Whatever dreads to die.

Stran. Decide between
 What you have been, or will be.

Arn. I have done so.
 You have open'd brighter prospects to my eyes,
 And sweeter to my heart. As I am now,
 I might be fear'd, admired, respected, loved
 Of all save those next to me, of whom I
 Would be loved. As thou showest me
 A choice of forms, I take the one I view.
 Haste! haste!

Stran. And what shall I wear?

Arn. Surely, he
 Who can command all forms will choose the highest,
 Something superior even to that which was
 Pelides now before us. Perhaps *his*
 Who slew him, that of Paris: or—still higher—
 The poet's god, clothed in such limbs as are
 Themselves a poetry.

Stran. Less will content me;
 For I, too, love a change.

Arn. Your aspect is
 Dusky, but not uncomely.

Stran. If I chose,

I might be whiter ; but I have a pēnchant
 For black—it is so honest, and besides
 Can neither blāsh with shame nor pale with fear ;
 But I have worn it long enough of late,
 And now I 'll take your figure.

Arn. Mine !

Siran. Yes. You
 Shall change with Thetis' son, and I with Bertha,
 Your mother's offspring. People have their tastes :
 You have yours—I mine.

Arn. Despatch ! Despatch !

Siran. Even so.

[The stranger takes some earth and moulds it along the turf, and then addresses the phantom of Achilles.]

Beautiful shadow
 Of Thetis's boy !
 Who sleeps in the meadow
 Whose grass grows o'er Troy :
 From the red earth, like Adam,
 Thy likeness I shape,
 As the being who made him,
 Whose actions I ape.
 Thou clay, be all glowing,
 Till the rose in his cheek
 Be as fair as, when blowing,
 It wears its first streak !
 Ye violets, I scatter,
 Now turn into eyes !
 And thou, sunshiny water,
 Of blood take the guise !
 Let these hyacinth boughs
 Be this long flowing hair,
 And wave o'er his brows
 As thou wavest in air !
 Let his heart be this marble
 I tear from the rock !
 But his voice as the warble
 Of birds on yon oak !
 Let his flesh be the purest
 Of mould, in which grew
 The lily-root surest,
 And drank the best dew !

Let his limbs be the lightest
 Which clay can compound,
 And his aspect the brightest
 On earth to be found !
 Elements, near me,
 Be mingled and stirr'd,
 Know me, and hear me,
 And leap to my word !
 Sunbeams, awaken
 This earth's animation !
 'T is done ! He hath taken
 His stand in creation !

[ARNOLD falls senseless ; his soul passes into the shape
 of Achilles, which rises from the ground ; while the
 phantom has disappeared, part by part, as the figure
 was formed from the earth.]

Arn. (*In his new form*). I love, and I shall be beloved !
 Oh, life !

At least I feel thee ! Glorious spirit !

Stran. Stop !
 What shall become of your abandon'd garment,
 Yon hump, and clump, and clod of ugliness,
 Which late you wore, or were ?

Arn. Who cares ? Let wolves
 And vultures take it, if they will.

Stran. And if
 They do, and are not scared by it, you 'll say
 It must be peace time, and no better fare
 Abroad i' the fields.

Arn. Let us but leave it there ;
 No matter what becomes on 't.

Stran. That 's ungracious,
 If not ungrateful. Whatsoe'er it be,
 It hath sustain'd your soul full many a day.

Arn. Ay, as the dunghill may conceal a gem
 Which is now set in gold, as jewels should be.

Stran. But if I give another form, it must be
 By fair exchange, not robbery. For they
 Who make men without woman's aid have long
 Had patents for the same, and do not love
 Your interlopers. The devil may take men,
 Not make them,—though he reap the benefit
 Of the original workmanship :—and therefore

Some one must be found to assume the shape
You have quitted.

Arn. Who would do so?

Stran. That I know not,
And therefore I must.

Arn. You!

Stran. I said it ere
You inhabited your present dome of beauty.

Arn. True. I forget all things in the new joy
Of this immortal change.

Stran. In a few moments
I will be as you were, and you shall see
Yourself for ever by you, as your shadow.

Arn. I would be spared this.

Stran. But it cannot be.
What! shrink already, being what you are,
From seeing what you were?

Arn. Do as thou wilt.

Stran. (to the late form of ARNOLD, extended on the
earth).

Clay! not dead, but soul-less!

Though no man would choose thee,
An immortal no less

Deigns not to refuse thee.
Clay thou art; and unto spirit
All clay is of equal merit.

Fire! *without* which nought can live;

Fire! but *in* which nought can live,

Says the fabled salamander,
Or immortal souls which wander,

Praying what doth not forgive,

Howling for a drop of water,

Burning in a quenchless lot.

Fire! the only element

Where nor fish, beast, bird, nor worm,

Save the worm which dieth not,

Can preserve a moment's form,

But must with thyself be blent:

Fire! man's safeguard and his slaughter:

Fire! Creation's first-born daughter,

And Destruction's threaten'd son,

When heaven with the world hath done:

Fire ! assist me to renew .
 Life in what lies in my view
 Stiff and cold !
 His resurrection rests with me and you !
 One little, marshy spark of flame—
 And he again shall seem the same ;
 But I his spirit's place shall hold !

[*An ignis-fatuus flits through the wood and rests on the brow of the body. The stranger disappears: the body rises.*]

Arn. (in his new form). Oh ! horrible !

Stran. (in ARNOLD'S late shape). What ! tremblest thou ?

Arn. Not so—

I merely shudder. Where is fled the shape
 Thou lately worst ?

Stran. To the world of shadows.

But let us thread the present. Whither wilt thou ?

Arn. Must thou be my companion ?

Stran. Wherefore not ?

Your betters keep worse company.

Arn. *My* betters !

Stran. Oh ! you wax proud, I see, of your new form :
 I'm glad of that. Ungrateful too ! 'That's well ;
 You improve apace ;—two changes in an instant,
 And you are old in the world's ways already.
 But bear with me : indeed you'll find me useful
 Upon your pilgrimage. But come, pronounce
 Where shall we now be errant ?

Arn. Where the world
 Is thickest, that I may behold it in
 Its workings.

Stran. That 's to say, where there is war
 And woman in activity. Let's see !
 Spain—Italy—the new Atlantic world—
 Afric, with all its Moors. In very truth,
 There is small choice : the whole race are just now
 Tugging as usual at each other's hearts.

Arn. I have heard great things of Rome.

Stran. A goodly choice—

And scarce a better to be found on earth,
 Since Sodom was put out. The field is wide too ;
 For now the Frank, and Hun, and Spanish scion

Of the old Vandals, are at play along
The sunny shores of the world's garden.

Arn. How
Shall we proceed?

Stran. Like gallants, on good coursers.
What, ho! my chargers! Never yet were better,
Since Phaeton was upset into the Po.
Our pages too!

Enter two Pages, with four coal-black horses.

Arn. A noble sight!

Stran. And of
A noble breed. Match me in Barbary,
Or your Kochlini race of Araby,
With these!

Arn. The mighty steam, which volumes high
From their proud nostrils, burns the very air;
And sparks of flame, like dancing fire-flies, wheel
Around their manes, as common insects swarm
Round common steeds toward sunset.

Stran. Mount, my lord:
They and I are your servitors.

Arn. And these
Our dark-eyed pages—what may be their names?

Stran. You shall baptize them.

Arn. What! in holy water?

Stran. Why not? The deeper sinner, better saint.

Arn. They are beautiful, and cannot, sure, be demons.

Stran. True; the devil's always ugly; and your beauty
Is never diabolical.

Arn. I'll call him
Who bears the golden horn, and wears such bright
And blooming aspect, *Huon*; for he looks
Like to the lovely boy lost in the forest,
And never found till now. And for the other
And darker, and more thoughtful, who smiles not,
But looks as serious though serene as night,
He shall be *Memnon*, from the Ethiop king
Whose statue turns a harper once a day.
And you?

Stran. I have ten thousand names, and twice
As many attributes: but as I wear
A human shape, will take a human name.

Arn. More human than the shape (though it was mine
once)

I trust.

Stran. Then call me Cæsar.

Arn. Why, that name
Belongs to empires, and has been but borne
By the world's lords.

Stran. And therefore fittest for
The devil in disguise—since so you deem me,
Unless you call me pope instead.

Arn. Well, then,
Cæsar thou shalt be. For myself, my name
Shall be plain Arnold still.

Cæs. We'll add a title—
"Count Arnold:" it hath no ungracious sound,
And will look well upon a billet-doux.

Arn. Or in an order for a battle-field.

Cæs. (sings). To horse! to horse! my coal-black steed

Paws the ground and sniffs the air!

There 's not a foal of Arab's breed

More knows whom he must bear;

On the hill he will not tire,

Swifter as it waxes higher;

In the marsh he will not slacken,

On the plain be overtaken;

In the wave he will not sink,

Nor pause at the brook's side to drink;

In the race he will not pant,

In the combat he 'll not faint;

On the stones he will not stumble,

Time nor toil shall make him humble;

In the stall he will not stiffen,

But be winged as a griffin,

Only flying with his feet:

And will not such a voyage be sweet?

Merrily! merrily! never unsound,

Shall our bonny black horses skim over the ground!

From the Alps to the Caucasus, ride we, or fly!

For we'll leave them behind in the glance of an eye.

[*They mount their horses and disappear.*]

SCENE II.

A Camp before the walls of Rome.

ARNOLD and CÆSAR.

Cæs. You are well enter'd now.

Arn. Ay ; but my path
Has been o'er carcasses : mine eyes are full
Of blood.

Cæs. Then wipe them, and see clearly. Why !
Thou art a conqueror ; the chosen knight
And free companion of the gallant Bourbon,
Late constable of France : and now to be
Lord of the city which hath been earth's lord
Under its emperors, and—changing sex,
Not sceptre, an hermaphrodite of empire—
Lady of the old world.

Arn. How *old* ? What ! are there
New worlds ?

Cæs. To *you*. You'll find there are such shortly,
By its rich harvests, new disease, and gold ;
From one *half* of the world named a *whole* new one,
Because you know no better than the dull
And dubious notice of your eyes and ears.

Arn. I'll trust them.

• Cæs. Do ! They will deceive you sweetly,
And that is better than the bitter truth.

Arn. Dog !

Cæs. • Man !

Arn. Devil !

Cæs. Your obedient humble servant.

Arn. Say *master* rather. Thou hast lured me on,
Through scenes of blood and lust, till I am here.

Cæs. And where wouldst thou be ?

Arn. Oh, at peace—in peace.

Cæs. And where is that which is so ? From the star
To the winding worm, all life is motion ; and
In life *commotion* is the extremest point
Of life. The planet wheels till it becomes
A comet, and destroying as it sweeps
The stars, goes out. The poor worm winds its way,
Living upon the death of other things,

But still, like them, must live and die, the subject
 Of something which has made it live and die.
 You must obey what all obey, the rule
 Of fix'd necessity : against her edict
 Rebellion prospers not.

Arn. And when it prospers——

Cæs. 'T is no rebellion.

Arn. Will it prosper now?

Cæs. The Bourbon hath given orders for the assault,
 And by the dawn there will be work.

Arn. Alas !

And shall the city yield? I see the giant
 Abode of the true God, and his true saint,
 Saint Peter, rear its dome and cross into
 That sky whence Christ ascended from the cross,
 Which his blood made a badge of glory and
 Of joy (as once of torture unto him,
 God and God's Son, man's sole and only refuge).

Cæs. 'T is there, and shall be.

Arn. What?

Cæs. The crucifix

Above, and many altar shrines below.
 Also some culverins upon the walls,
 And harquebusses, and what not ; besides
 The men who are to kindle them to death
 Of other men.

Arn. And those scarce mortal arches,
 Pile above pile of everlasting wall,
 The theatre where emperors and their subjects
 (Those subjects *Romans*) stood at gaze upon
 The battles of the monarchs of the wild
 And wood, the lion and his tusky rebels
 Of the then untamed desert, brought to joust
 In the 'arena (as right well they might,
 When they had left no human foe unconquer'd) ;
 Made even the forest pay its tribute of
 Life to their amphitheatre, as well
 As Dacia men to die the eternal death
 For a sole instant's pastime, and " Pass on
 To a new gladiator !"—Must it fall?

Cæs. The city, or the amphitheatre?
 The church, or one, or all? for you confound
 Both them and me.

Arn. To-morrow sounds the assault
With the first cock-crow.

Cæs. Which, if it end with
The evening's first nightingale, will be
Something new in the annals of great sieges;
For men must have their prey after long toil.

Arn. The sun goes down as calmly, and perhaps
More beautifully, than he did on Rome
On the day Remus leapt her wall.

Cæs. I saw him.

Arn. You!

Cæs. Yes, sir. You forget I am or was
Spirit, till I took up with your cast shape,
And a worse name. I'm Cæsar and a hunchback
Now. Well! the first of Cæsars was a bald-head,
And loved his laurels better as a wig
(So history says) than as a glory. Thus
The world runs on, but we'll be merry still.
I saw your Romulus (simple as I am)
Slay his own twin, quick-born of the same womb,
Because he leapt a ditch ('t was then no wall,
Whate'er it now be); and Rome's earliest cement
Was brother's blood; and if its native blood
Be spilt till the choked Tiber be as red
As e'er 't was yellow, it will never wear
The deep hue of the ocean and the earth,
Which the great robber sons of fratricide
Have made their never-ceasing scene of slaughter
For ages.

Arn. But what have these done, their far
Remote descendants, who have lived in peace,
The peace of heaven, and in her sunshine of
Piety?

Cæs. And what had *they* done, whom the old
Romans o'erswept?—Hark!

Arn. They are soldiers singing
A reckless roundelay, upon the eve
Of many deaths, it may be of their own.

Cæs. And why should they not sing as well as swans?
They are black ones, to be sure.

Arn. So, you are learn'd,
I see, too?

Cæs. In my grammar, certes. I

Was educated for a monk of all times,
And once I was well versed in the forgotten
Etruscan letters, and—were I so minded—
Could make their hieroglyphics plainer than
Your alphabet.

Arn. And wherefore do you not ?

Cæs. It answers better to resolve the alphabet
Back into hieroglyphics. Like your statesman,
And prophet, pontiff, doctor, alchymist,
Philosopher, and what not, they have built
More Babels, without new dispersion, than
The stammering young ones of the flood's dull ooze,
Who fail'd and fled each other. Why? why, marry,
Because no man could understand his neighbour.
They are wiser now, and will not separate
For nonsense. Nay, it is their brotherhood,
Their Shibboleth, their Koran, Talmud, their
Cabala; their best brick-work, wherewithal
They build more——

Arn. (interrupting him). Oh, thou everlasting sneerer!
Be silent! How the soldier's rough strain seems
Softened by distance to a hymn-like cadence!
Listen!

Cæs. Yes. I have heard the angels sing.

Arn. And demons howl.

Cæs. And man, too. Let us listen:
I love all music.

Song of the Soldiers within.

The black bands came over,
The Alps and their snow;
With Bourbon, the rover,
They pass'd the broad Po.
We have beaten all foemen,
We have captured a king,
We have turn'd back on no men,
And so let us sing!
Here's the Bourbon for ever!
Though pennyless all
We'll have one more endeavour
At yonder old wall.
With the Bourbon we'll gather
At day-dawn before

The gates, and together .
 Or break or climb o'er
 The wall : on the ladder
 As mounts each firm foot,
 Our shout shall grow gladder,
 And death only be mute.
 With the Bourbon we'll mount o'er
 The walls of old Rome,
 And who then shall count o'er
 The spoils of each dome?
 Up! up with the lily!
 And down with the keys!
 In old Rome, the seven-hilly,
 We'll revel at ease.
 Her streets shall be gory,
 Her Tiber all red,
 And her temples so hoary
 Shall clang with our tread.
 Oh, the Bourbon! the Bourbon!
 The Bourbon for aye!
 Of our song bear the burden!
 And fire, fire away!
 With Spain for the vanguard,
 Our varied host comes;
 And next to the Spaniard
 Beat Germany's drums;
 And Italy's lances
 Are couch'd at their mother;
 But our leader from France is,
 Who warr'd with his brother.
 Oh, the Bourbon! the Bourbon!
 Sans country or home,
 We'll follow the Bourbon,
 To plunder old Rome.

Cæs. An indifferent song
 For those within the walls, methinks, to hear.

Arn. Yes, if they keep to their chorus. But here comes
 The general with his chiefs and men of trust.
 A goodly rebel!

Enter the Constable BOURBON* "*cum suis*," &c. &c.

Phil. How now, noble prince,
 You are not cheerful?

Bourb. Why should I be so?

Phil. Upon the eve of conquest, such as ours,
Most men would be so.

Bourb. If I were secure!

Phil. Doubt not our soldiers. Were the walls of
adamant,
They'd crack them. Hunger is a sharp artillery.

Bourb. That they will falter is my least of fears.
That they will be repulsed, with Bourbon for
Their chief, and all their kindled appetites
To marshal them on—were those hoary walls
Mountains, and those who guard them like the gods
Of the old fables, I would trust my Titans;—
But now——

Phil. They are but men who war with mortals.

Bourb. True: but those walls have girded in great ages,
And sent forth mighty spirits. The past earth
And present phantom of imperious Rome
Is peopled with those warriors; and methinks
They flit along the eternal city's rampart,
And stretch their glorious, gory, shadowy hands,
And beckon me away!

Phil. So let them! Wilt thou
Turn back from shadowy menaces of shadows?

Bourb. They do not menace me. I could have faced,
Methinks, a Sylla's menace; but they clasp,
And raise, and wring their dim and deathlike hands,
And with their thin aspen faces and fix'd eyes
Fascinate mine. Look there!

Phil. I look upon
A lofty battlement.

Bourb. And there!

Phil. Not even
A guard 'in sight; they wisely keep below,
Shelter'd by the grey parapet from some
Stray bullet of our lansquenets, who might
Practise in the cool twilight.

Bourb. You are blind.

Phil. If seeing nothing more than may be seen
Be so.

Bourb. A thousand years have mann'd the walls
With all their heroes,—the last Cato stands
And tears his bowels, rather than survive

The liberty of that I would enslave,
And the first Cæsar with his triumphs flits
From battlement to battlement.

Phil.

Then conquer

The walls for which he conquer'd, and be greater!

Bourb. True: so, I will or perish.

Phil.

You can *not*.

In such an enterprise to die is rather
The dawn of an eternal day, than death.

[*Count ARNOLD and CÆSAR advance.*]

Cæs. And the mere men—do they too sweat beneath
The noon of this same ever-scorching glory?

Bourb.

Ah!

Welcome the bitter hunchback! and his master,
The beauty of our host, and brave as beauteous,
And generous as lovely. We shall find
Work for you both ere morning.

Cæs.

You will find,

So please your highness, no less for yourself.

Bourb. And if I do, there will not be a labourer
More forward, hunchback!

Cæs.

You may well say so,

For you have seen that back—as general,
Placed in the rear in action—but your foes
Have never seen it.

Bourb.

That's a fair retort,

For I provoked it:—but the Bourbon's breast
Has been, and ever shall be, far advanced
In danger's face as yours, were you the *devil*.

Cæs. And if I were, I might have saved myself
The toil of coming here.

Phil.

Why so?

Cæs.

One half

Of your brave bands of their own bold accord
Will go to him, the other half be sent,
More swiftly, not less surely.

Bourb.

Arnold, your

Slight crooked friend's as snake-like in his words
As his deeds.

Cæs.

Your highness much mistakes me.

The first snake was a flatterer—I am none;
And for my deeds, I only sting when stung.

[*quick*]

Bourb. You are brave, and that's enough for me; and

In speech as sharp in action—and that 's more.
I am not alone a soldier, but the soldiers'
Comrade.

Cæs. They are but bad company, your highness;
And worse even for their friends than foes, as being
More permanent acquaintance.

Phil. How now, fellow!
Thou waxest insolent, beyond the privilege
Of a buffoon.

Cæs. You mean I speak the truth.
I'll lie—it is as easy: then you'll praise me
For calling you a hero.

Bourb. Philibert!
Let him alone; he's brave, and ever has
Been first, with that swart face and mountain shoulder,
In field or storm, and patient in starvation;
And for his tongue, the camp is full of licence,
And the sharp stinging of a lively rogue
Is, to my mind, far preferable to
The gross, dull, heavy, gloomy execration
Of a mere famish'd, sullen, grumbling slave,
Whom nothing can convince save a full meal,
And wine, and sleep, and a few maravedis,
With which he deems him rich.

Cæs. It would be well
If the earth's princes ask'd no more.

Bourb. Be silent!

Cæs. Ay, but not idle. Work yourself with words.
You have few to speak.

Phil. What means the audacious prater?

Cæs. To prate, like other prophets.

Bourb. Philibert!
Why will you vex him? Have we not enough
To think on? Arnold! I will lead the attack
To-morrow.

Arn. I have heard as much, my lord.

Bourb. And you will follow?

Arn. Since I must not lead.

Bourb. 'T is necessary for the further daring
Of our too needy army, that their chief
Plant the first foot upon the foremost ladder's
First step.

Cæs. Upon its topmost, let us hope:

So shall he have his full deserts.

Bourb. The world's
Great capital perchance is ours to-morrow.
Through every change the seven-hill'd city hath
Retain'd her sway o'er nations, and the Cæsars
But yielded to the Alarics, the Alarics
Unto the pontiffs. Roman, Goth, or priest,
Still the world's masters! Civilized, barbarian,
Or saintly, still the walls of Romulus
Have been the circus of an empire. Well!
'T was *their* turn—now 't is ours; and let us hope
That we will fight as well, and rule much better.

Cæs. No doubt, the camp's the school of civic rights.
What would you make of Rome?

Bourb. That which it was.

Cæs. In Alaric's time?

Bourb. No, slave! in the first Cæsar's,
Whose name you bear like other curs——

Cæs. And kings!
'T is a great name for blood-hounds.

Bourb. There's a demon
In that fierce rattlesnake thy tongue. Wilt never
Be serious?

Cæs. On the eve of battle, no;—
That were not soldier-like. 'T is for the general
To be more pensive: we adventurers
Must be more cheerful. Wherefore should we think?
Our tutelar deity, in a leader's shape,
Takes care of us. Keep thought aloof from hosts!
If the knaves take to thinking, you will have
To crack those walls alone.

Bourb. You may sneer, since
'T is lucky for you that you fight no worse for 't.

Cæs. I thank you for the freedom; 't is the only
Pay I have taken in your highness' service.

Bourb. Well, sir, to-morrow you shall pay yourself.
Look on those towers; they hold my treasury;
But, Philibert, we'll in to council. Arnold,
We would request your presence.

Arn. Prince! my service
Is yours, as in the field.

Bourb. In both we prize it,
And yours will be a post of trust at daybreak.

Cæs. And mine?

Bourb. To follow glory with the Bourbon.

Good night!

Arn. (to CÆSAR). Prepare our armour for the assault,
And wait within my tent.

[*Exeunt* BOURBON, ARNOLD, PHILIBERT,

Cæs. (solus). Within thy tent!

Think'st thou that I pass from thee with my presence?

Or that this crooked coffer, which contain'd

Thy principle of life, is aught to me

Except a mask? And these are men, forsooth!

Heroes and chiefs, the flower of Adam's bastards!

This is the consequence of giving matter

The power of thought. It is a stubborn substance,

And thinks chaotically, as in acts,

Ever relapsing into its first elements.

Well! I must play with these poor puppets: 't is

The spirit's pastime in his idler hours.

When I grow weary of it, I have business

Amongst the stars, which these poor creatures deem

Were made for them to look at. 'T were a jest now

To bring one down amongst them, and set fire

Unto their anthill: how the pismires then

Would scamper o'er the scalding soil, and, ceasing

From tearing down each other's nests, pipe forth

One universal orison! Ha! ha! [*Exit* CÆSAR.]

PART II.

SCENE I.—*Before the walls of Rome.—The Assault: the Army in motion, with ladders to scale the walls; BOURBON, with a white scarf over his armour, foremost.*

Chorus of Spirits in the air.

I.

'T is the morn, but dim and dark,

Whither flies the silent lark?

Whither shrinks the clouded sun?

Is the day indeed begun?

Nature's eye is melancholy

O'er the city high and holy:

But without there is a din
Should arouse the saints within,
And revive the heroic ashes,
Round which yellow Tiber dashes,
O, ye seven hills! awaken,
Ere your very base be shaken!

II.

Hearken to the steady stamp!
Mars is in their every tramp!
Not a step is out of tune,
As the tides obey the moon!
On they march, though to self-slaughter,
Regular as rolling water,
Whose high waves o'ersweep the border
Of huge moles, but keep their order,
Breaking only rank by rank.
Hearken to the armour's clank!
Look down o'er each frowning warrior,
How he glares upon the barrier:
Look on each step of each ladder,
As the stripes that streak an adder.

III.

Look upon the bristling wall,
Mann'd without an interval!
Round and round, and tier on tier,
Cannon's black mouth, shining spear,
Lit match, bell-mouth'd musketoon,
Gaping to be murderous soon;
All the warlike gear of old,
Mix'd with what we now behold,
In this strife 'twixt old and new,
Gather like a locusts' crew.
Shade of Remus! 't is a time
Awful as thy brother's crime!
Christians war against Christ's shrine:—
Must its lot be like to thine?

IV. •

Near—and near—and nearer still,
As the earthquake saps the hill,

First with trembling, hollow motion,
 Like a scarce awaken'd ocean,
 Then with stronger shock and louder,
 Till the rocks are crush'd to powder,—
 Onward sweeps the rolling host !
 Heroes of the immortal host !
 Mighty chiefs ! eternal shadows !
 First flowers of the bloody meadows
 Which encompass Rome, the mother
 Of a people without brother !
 Will you sleep when nations' quarrels
 Plough the root up of your laurels ?
 Ye who weep o'er Carthage burning,
 Weep not—*strike !* for Rome is mourning !

V.

Onward sweep the varied nations !
 Famine long hath dealt their rations !
 To the wall, with hate and hunger,
 Numerous as wolves, and stronger,
 On they sweep. Oh, glorious city !
 Must thou be a theme for pity ?
 Fight, like your first sire, each Roman !
 Alaric was a gentle foeman,
 Match'd with Bourbon's black banditti !
 Rouse thee, thou eternal city ;
 Rouse thee ! Rather give the torch
 With thine own hand to thy porch,
 Than behold such hosts pollute
 Your worst dwelling with their foot.

VI.

Ah ! behold yon bleeding spectre !
 Ilion's children find no Hector ;
 Priam's offspring loved their brother ;
 Rome's great sire forgot his mother,
 When he slew his gallant twin,
 With inexpiable sin.
 See the giant shadow stride
 O'er the ramparts high and wide !
 When the first o'erleapt thy wall,
 Its foundation mourn'd thy fall.

Now, though towering like a Babel,
Who to stop his steps are able?
Stalking o'er thy highest dome,
Remus claims his vengeance, Rome!

VII.

Now they reach thee in their anger:
Fire and smoke and hellish clangour
Are around thee, thou world's wonder,
Death is in thy walls and under.
Now the meeting steel first clashes,
Downward then the ladder crashes,
With its iron load all gleaming,
Lying at its foot blaspheming!
Up again! for every warrior
Slain, another climbs the barrier.
Thicker grows the strife: thy ditches
Europe's mingling gore enriches.
Rome! although thy wall may perish,
Such manure thy fields will cherish,
Making gay the harvest-home;
But thy hearths, alas! oh, Rome!—
Yet be Rome amidst thine anguish,
Fight as thou wast wont to vanquish!

VIII.

Yet once more, ye old Penates!
Let not your quench'd hearths be Atë's!
Yet again, ye shadowy heroes,
Yield not to these stranger Neros!
Though the son who slew his mother
Shed Rome's blood, he was your brother:
'T was the Roman curb'd the Roman;—
Brennus was a baffled foeman.
Yet again, ye saints and martyrs,
Rise! for yours are holier charters!
Mighty gods of temples falling,
Yet in ruin still appalling!
Mightier founders of those altars,
True and Christian,—strike the assaulters!
Tiber! Tiber! let thy torrent
Show even nature's self abhorrent.

Let each breathing heart dilated
 Turn, as doth the lion baited !
 Rome be crush'd to one wide tomb,
 But be still the Roman's Rome !

[BOURBON, ARNOLD, CÆSAR, and others, arrive at the foot of the wall. ARNOLD is about to plant his ladder.

Bourb. Hold, Arnold ! I am first.

Arn. Not so, my lord.

Bourb. Hold, sir, I charge you ! Follow ! I am proud
 Of such a follower, but will brook no leader.

[BOURBON plants his ladder, and begins to mount.
 Now, boys ! On ! on !

[A shot strikes him, and BOURBON falls.

Cæs. And off.

Arn. Eternal powers !

The host will be appall'd,—but vengeance ! vengeance !

Bourb. 'T is nothing—lend me your hand.

[BOURBON takes ARNOLD by the hand, and rises ; but
 as he puts his foot on the step, falls again.

Arnold ! I am sped.

Conceal my fall—all will go well—conceal it !

Fling my cloak o'er what will be dust anon ;

Let not the soldiers see it.

Arn. You must be

Removed ; the aid of——

Bourb. No, my gallant boy :

Death is upon me. But what is *one* life ?

The Bourbon's spirit shall command them still.

Keep them yet ignorant that I am but clay,

Till they are conquerors—then do as you may.

Cæs. Would not your highness choose to kiss the cross ?

We have no priest here, but the hilt of sword

May serve instead : it did the same for Bayard.

Bourb. Thou bitter slave ! to name *him* at this time !
 But I deserve it.

Arn. (to CÆSAR). Villain, hold your peace !

Cæs. What, when a Christian dies ? Shall I not offer
 A Christian "Vade in pace?"

Arn. Silence ! Oh !

Those eyes are glazing which o'erlook'd the world,
 And saw no equal.

Bourb. • Arnold, shouldst thou see
France—But hark! hark! the assault grows warmer—
Oh!

For but an hour, a minute more of life,
To die within the wall! Hence, Arnold, hence!
You lose time—they will conquer Rome without thee.

Arn. And without thee.

Bourb. Not so; I'll lead them still
In spirit. Cover up my dust, and breathe not
That I have ceased to breathe. Away! and be
Victorious.

Arn. But I must not leave thee thus.

Bourb. You must—farewell—Up! up! the world is
winning. [BOURBON dies.

Cæs. (to ARNOLD). Come, count, to business.

Arn. True. I'll weep hereafter.

[ARNOLD covers BOURBON'S body with a mantle, mounts
the ladder, crying

The Bourbon! Bourbon! On, boys! Rome is ours!

Cæs. Good night, lord constable! thou wert a man.

[CÆSAR follows ARNOLD; they reach the battlement;
ARNOLD and CÆSAR are struck down.

Cæs. A precious somerset! Is your countship injured?

Arn. No. [Remounts the ladder.

Cæs. A rare blood-hound, when his own is heated!
And 't is no boy's play. Now he strikes them down!
His hand is on the battlement—he grasps it
As though it were an altar; now his foot
Is on it, and——What have we here?—a Roman?

[A man falls.

The first bird of the covey! he has fallen
On the outside of the nest. Why, how now, fellow?

Wounded Man. A drop of water!

Cæs. Blood's the only liquid
Nearer than Tiber.

Wounded Man. I have died for Rome. [Dies.

Cæs. And so did Bourbon, in another sense.

Oh, these immortal men! and their great motives!
But I must after my young charge. He is
By this time i' the forum. Charge! charge!

[CÆSAR mounts the ladder; the scene closes.

SCENE II.

The City.—Combats between the Besiegers and Besieged in the streets. Inhabitants flying in confusion.

Enter CÆSAR.

Cæs. I cannot find my hero; he is mix'd
With the heroic crowd that now pursue
The fugitives, or battle with the desperate.
What have we here? A cardinal or two
That do not seem in love with martyrdom.
How the old red-shanks scamper! Could they doff
Their hose as they have doff'd their hats, 't would be
A blessing, as a mark the less for plunder.
But let them fly; the crimson kennels now
Will not much stain their stockings, since the mire
Is of the self-same purple hue.

Enter a Party fighting—ARNOLD at the head of the Besiegers.

He comes,
Hand in hand with the mild twins—Gore and Glory.
Holla! hold, count!

Arn. Away! they must not rally.

Cæs. I tell thee, be not rash; a golden bridge
Is for a flying enemy. I gave thee
A form of beauty, and an
Exemption from some maladies of body,
But not of mind, which is not mine to give.
But though I gave the form of Thetis' son,
I dipt thee not in Styx; and 'gainst a foe
I would not warrant thy chivalric heart
More than Pelides' heel; why, then, be cautious,
And know thyself a mortal still.

Arn. And who
With aught of soul would combat if he were
Invulnerable? That were pretty sport.
Think'st thou I beat for hares when lions roar?

[ARNOLD rushes into the combat.]

Cæs. A precious sample of humanity!

Well, his blood's up; and if a little's shed,
'T will serve to curb his fever.

[ARNOLD engages with a Roman, who retires towards
a portico.

Arn. Yield thee, slave!

I promise quarter.

Rom. That's soon said.

Arn. And done—

My word is known.

Rom. So shall be my deeds.

[They re-engage. CÆSAR comes forward.

Cæs. Why, Arnold! hold thine own: thou hast in hand
A famous artisan, a cunning sculptor;
Also a dealer in the sword and dagger.
Not so, my musqueteer; 't was he who slew
The Bourbon from the wall.

Arn. Ay, did he so?

Then he hath carved his monument.

Rom. I yet

May live to carve your better's.

Cæs. Well said, my man of marble! Benvenuto,
Thou hast some practice in both ways; and he
Who slays Cellini will have work'd as hard
As e'er thou didst upon Carrara's blocks.

[ARNOLD disarms and wounds CELLINI, but slightly:
the latter draws a pistol, and fires; then retires,
and disappears through the portico.

Cæs. How farest thou? Thou hast a taste, methinks,
Of red Bellona's banquet.

Arn. (staggers). 'T is a scratch.

Lend me thy scarf. He shall not 'scape me thus.

Cæs. Where is it?

Arn. In the shoulder, not the sword arm—
And that's enough. I am thirsty: would I had
A helm of water!

Cæs. That's a liquid now
In requisition, but by no means easiest
To come at.

Arn. And my thirst increases;—but
I'll find a way to quench it.

Cæs. Or be quench'd
Thyself.

Arn. The chance is even; we will throw

The dice thereon. But I lose time in prating ;
 Prithee be quick. [CÆSAR binds on the scarf.

And what dost thou so idly ?

Why dost not strike ?

Cæs. Your old philosophers
 Beheld mankind, as mere spectators of
 The Olympic games. When I behold a prize
 Worth wrestling for, I may be found a Milo.

Arn. Ay, 'gainst an oak.

Cæs. A forest, when it suits me :
 I combat with a mass, or not at all.
 Meantime, pursue thy sport as I do mine ;
 Which is just now to gaze, since all these labourers
 Will reap my harvest gratis.

Arn. Thou art still—
 A fiend !

Cæs. And thou—a man.

Arn. Why—such I fain would show me.

Cæs. True—as men are.

Arn. And what is that ?

Cæs. Thou feelest and thou see'st.

[Exit ARNOLD, joining in the combat, which still continues between detached parties. The scene closes.]

SCENE III.

*St. Peter's—The Interior of the Church—The Pope at the Altar
 —Priests, &c., crowding in confusion, and Citizens flying for
 refuge, pursued by Soldiery.*

Enter CÆSAR.

A Spanish Soldier. Down with them, comrades ! seize
 upon those lamps !

Cleave yon bald-pated shaveling to the chine !
 His rosary's of gold !

Lutheran Soldier. Revenge ! revenge !
 Plunder hereafter, but for vengeance now—
 Yonder stands Anti-Christ !

Cæs. (*interposing*). How now, schismatic ?
 What wouldst thou ?

Luth. Sold. In the holy name of Christ,
 Destroy proud Anti-Christ. I am a Christian.

Cæs. Yes, a disciple that would make the founder

Of your belief renounce it, could he see
Such proselytes. Best stint thyself to plunder.

Luth. Sold. I say he is the devil.

Cæs. Hush! keep that secret,
Lest he should recognize you for his own.

Luth. Sold. Why would you save him? I repeat he is
The devil, or the devil's vicar upon earth.

Cæs. And that's the reason: would you make a quarrel
With your best friends? You had far best be quiet;
His hour is not yet come.

Luth. Sold. That shall be seen!

[*The Lutheran Soldier rushes forward: a shot strikes him from one of the Pope's Guards, and he falls at the foot of the Altar.*]

Cæs. (to the Lutheran). I told you so.

Luth. Sold. And will you not avenge me?

Cæs. Not I! You know that "Vengeance is the
Lord's:"

You see he loves no interlopers.

Luth. Sold. (dying). Oh!
Had I but slain him, I had gone on high,
Crown'd with eternal glory! Heaven forgive
My feebleness of arm that reach'd him not,
And take thy servant to thy mercy. 'T is
A glorious triumph still; proud Babylon's
No more; the Harlot of the Seven Hills
Hath changed her scarlet raiment for sackcloth
And ashes! [*The Lutheran dies.*]

Cæs. Yes, thine own amidst the rest.
Well done, old Babel!

[*The Guards defend themselves desperately, while the Pontiff escapes, by a private passage, to the Vatican and the Castle of St. Angelo.*]

Cæs. Ha! right nobly battled!
Now, priest! now, soldier! the two great professions,
Together by the ears and hearts! I have not
Seen a more comic pantomime since Titus
Took Jewry. But the Romans had the best then;
Now they must take their turn.

•*Soldiers.* He hath escaped!
Follow!

Another Sold. They have barr'd the narrow passage up,
And it is clogg'd with dead even to the door.

Cæs. I am glad he hath escaped: he may thank me
for't

In part. I would not have his bulls abolish'd—
'T were worth one half our empire: his indulgences
Demand some in return:—no, no, he must not
Fall;—and, besides, his now escape may furnish
A future miracle, in future proof
Of his infallibility.

[To the Spanish Soldiery.

Well, cut-throats!

What do you pause for? If you make not haste,
There will not be a link of pious gold left.
And you, too, catholics! Would ye return
From such a pilgrimage without a relic?
The very Lutherans have more true devotion:
See how they strip the shrines!

Soldiers.

By holy Peter!

He speaks the truth; the heretics will bear
The best away.

Cæs.

And that were shame! Go to!

Assist in their conversion.

[The Soldiers disperse; many quit the Church, others
enter.

Cæs.

They are gone,

And others come: so flows the wave on wave
Of what these creatures call eternity,
Deeming themselves the breakers of the ocean,
While they are but its bubbles, ignorant
That foam is their foundation. So another!

Enter OLIMPIA, flying from the pursuit—She springs upon
the Altar.

Sold. She's mine!

Another Sold. (opposing the former). You lie, I track'd
her first: and were she

The Pope's niece, I'll not yield her. [They fight.

3d Sold. (advancing towards OLIMPIA). You may settle
Your claims; I'll make mine good.

Olimp.

Infernal slave!

You touch me not alive,

3d Sold.

Alive or dead!

Olimp. (embracing a massive crucifix). Respect your
God!

3d Sold. Yes, when he shines in Gold.
 Girl, you but grasp your dowry.

[As he advances, OLIMPIA with a strong and sudden effort, casts down the crucifix; it strikes the Soldier, who falls.

3d Sold. Oh, great God!

Olimp. Ah! now you recognize him.

3d Sold. My brain's crush'd!
 Comrades, help, ho! All's darkness! [He dies.

Other Soldiers (coming up). Slay her, although she had a thousand lives:

She hath kill'd our comrade.

Olimp. Welcome such a death!
 You have no life to give, which the worst slave
 Would take. Great God! through thy redeeming Son,
 And thy Son's Mother, now receive me as
 I would approach thee, worthy her, and him, and thee!

Enter ARNOLD.

Arn. What do I see? Accursed Jackals!
 Forbear!

Cæs. (aside and laughing). Ha! ha! here's equity!
 The dogs

Have as much right as he. But to the issue!

Soldiers. Count, she hath slain our comrade.

Arn. With what weapon?

Sold. The cross, beneath which he is crush'd; behold
 Lie there, more like a worm than man; she cast it [him
 Upon his head.

Arn. Even so; there is a woman
 Worthy a brave man's liking. Were ye such,
 Ye would have honour'd her. But get ye hence,
 And thank your meanness, other God you have none,
 For your existence. Had you touch'd a hair
 Of those dishevell'd locks, I would have thinn'd
 Your ranks more than the enemy. Away!
 Ye jackals! gnaw the bones the lion leaves,
 But not even these till he permits.

A Sold. (murmuring). The lion
 Might conquer for himself then.

Arn. (cuts him down). Mutineer!
 Rebel in hell—you shall obey on earth!

[The Soldiers assault ARNOLD,

Arn. Come on! I'm glad on't! I will show *you*,
 slaves,
 How you should be commanded, and who led you
 First o'er the wall you were so shy to scale,
 Until I waved my banners from its height,
 As you are bold within it.

[*ARNOLD mows down the foremost; the rest throw down
 their arms.*]

Soldiers. Mercy! mercy!

Arn. Then learn to grant it. Have I taught you *who*
 Led you o'er Rome's eternal battlements?

Soldiers. We saw it, and we know it; yet forgive
 A moment's error in the heat of conquest—
 The conquest which you led to.

Arn. Get you hence!
 Hence to your quarters! you will find them fix'd
 In the Colonna palace.

Olimp. (aside). In my father's
 House!

Arn. (to the Soldiers). Leave your arms: ye have no
 further need
 Of such: the city's render'd. And mark well
 You keep your hands clean, or I'll find out a stream
 As red as Tiber now runs, for your baptism.

Soldiers (deposing their arms and departing). We obey!

Arn. (to OLIMPIA). Lady, you are safe.

Olimp. I should be so,
 Had I a knife even; but it matters not—
 Death hath a thousand gates; and on the marble,
 Even at the altar foot, whence I look down
 Upon destruction, shall my head be dash'd,
 Ere you ascend it. God forgive thee, man!

Arn. I wish to merit his forgiveness, and
 Thine own, although I have not injured thee.

Olimp. No! Thou hast only sack'd my native land,—
 No injury!—and made my father's house
 A den of thieves! No injury!—this temple—
 Slippery with Roman and with holy gore!
 No injury! And now thou wouldst preserve me,
 To be—but that shall never be!

[*She raises her eyes to heaven, folds her robe round her,
 and prepares to dash herself down on the side of the
 Altar opposite to that where ARNOLD stands.*]

Arn.

Hold ! hold !

I swear.

Olimp. Spare thine already forfeit soul
A perjury for which even hell would loathe thee.
I know thee.

Arn. No, thou know'st me not ; I am not
Of these men, though——

Olimp. I judge thee by thy mates ;
It is for God to judge thee as thou art.
I see thee purple with the blood of Rome ;
Take mine, 't is all thou e'er shalt have of me,
And here, upon the marble of this temple,
Where the baptismal font baptized me God's,
I offer him a blood less holy
But not less pure (pure as it left me then,
A redeem'd infant) than the holy water
The saints have sanctified !

[OLIMPIA waves her hand to ARNOLD with disdain, and dashes herself on the pavement from the Altar.

Arn.

Eternal God !

I feel thee now ! Help ! help ! She's gone.

Cæs. (*approaches*).

I am here.

Arn. Thou ! but oh, save her !

Cæs. (*assisting him to raise OLIMPIA*). She hath done it
well !

The leap was serious.

Arn.

Oh ! she is lifeless !

Cæs.

If

She be so, I have nought to do with that :

The resurrection is beyond me.

Arn.

Slave !

Cæs. Ay, slave or master, 't is all one : methinks
Good words, however, are as well at times.

Arn. Words !—Canst thou aid her ?

Cæs.

I will try. A sprinkling
Of that same holy water may be useful.

[*He brings some in his helmet from the font.*

Arn. 'T is mix'd with blood.

Cæs.

There is no cleaner now

In Rome.

Arn. How pale ! how beautiful ! how lifeless !
Alive or dead, thou essence of all beauty,
I love but thee !

Cæs. Even so Achilles loved
Penthesilea : with his form it seems
You have his heart, and yet it was no soft one.

Arn. She breathes ! But no, 't was nothing, or the last
Faint flutter life disputes with death.

Cæs. She breathes.

Arn. Thou say'st it ? Then 't is truth.

Cæs. You do me right—

The devil speaks truth much oftener than he's deem'd :
He hath an ignorant audience.

Arn. (*without attending to him*). Yes ! her heart beats.
Alas ! that the first beat of the only heart
I ever wish'd to beat with mine should vibrate
To an assassin's pulse.

Cæs. A sage reflection,
But somewhat late i' the day. Where shall we bear her ?
I say she lives.

Arn. And will she live ?

Cæs. As much
As dust can.

Arn. Then she is dead !

Cæs. Bah ! bah ! You are so,
And do not know it. She will come to life—
Such as you think so, such as you now are ;
But we must work by human means.

Arn. We will
Convey her unto the Colonna palace,
Where I have pitch'd my banner.

Cæs. Come then ! raise her up !

Arn. Softly !

Cæs. As softly as they bear the dead
Perhaps because they cannot feel the jolting.

Arn. But doth she live indeed ?

Cæs. Nay, never fear !
But, if you rue it after, blame not me.

Arn. Let her but live !

Cæs. The spirit of her life
Is yet within her breast, and may revive.
Count ! count ! I am your servant in all things,
And this is a new office :—'t is not oft
I am employ'd in such ; but you perceive
How stanch a friend is what you call a fiend.
On earth you have often only fiends for friends ;

Now I desert not mine. Soft ! bear her hence,
The beautiful half-clay, and nearly spirit !
I am almost enamour'd of her, as
Of old the angels of her earliest sex.

Arn. Thou !

Cæs. I ! But fear not. I'll not be your rival.

Arn. Rival !

Cæs. I could be one right formidable ;
But since I slew the seven husbands of
Tobias' future bride (and after all
Was smoked out by some incense), I have laid
Aside intrigue : 't is rarely worth the trouble
Of gaining, or—what is more difficult—
Getting rid of your prize again ; for there's
The rub ! at least to mortals.

Arn. Prithee, peace !
Softly ! methinks her lips move, her eyes open !

Cæs. Like stars, no doubt ; for that's a metaphor
For Lucifer and Venus.

Arn. To the palace
Colonna, as I told you !

Cæs. Oh ! I know
My way through Rome.

Arn. Now onward, onward ! Gently !
[*Exeunt, bearing OLIMPIA. The scene closes.*

PART III.

SCENE I.—*A Castle in the Apennines, surrounded by a wild
but smiling Country. Chorus of Peasants singing before the
Gates.*

Chorus.

The wars are over,
The spring is come ;
The bride and her lover
Have sought their home :
They are happy, we rejoice ;
Let their hearts have an echo in every voice !

II.

The spring is come ; the violet 's gone,
 The first-born child of the early sun :
 With us she is but a winter's flower,
 The snow on the hills cannot blast her bower,
 And she lifts up her dewy eye of blue
 To the youngest sky of the self-same hue.

III.

And when the spring comes with her host
 Of flowers, that flower beloved the most
 Shrinks from the crowd that may confuse
 Her heavenly odour and virgin hues.

IV.

Pluck the others, but still remember
 Their herald out of dim December—
 The morning stars of all the flowers,
 The pledge of daylight's lengthen'd hours ;
 Nor midst the roses, e'er forget
 The virgin, virgin violet.

Enter CÆSAR.

Cæs. (singing). The wars are all over,
 Our swords are all idle,
 The steed bites the bridle,
 The casque 's on the wall,
 There 's rest for the rover ;
 But his armour is rusty,
 And the veteran grows crusty,
 As he yawns in the hall.
 He drinks—but what 's drinking ?
 A mere pause from thinking !
 No bugle awakes him with life-and-death call.

Chorus.

But the hound bayeth loudly,
 The boar 's in the wood,
 And the falcon longs proudly
 To spring from her hood :

On the wrist of the noble
 She sits like a crest,
 And the air is in trouble
 With birds from their nest.

Cæs. Oh ! shadow of glory !
 Dim image of war !
 But the chase hath no story,
 Her hero no star,
 Since Nimrod, the founder
 Of empire and chase,
 Who made the woods wonder
 And quake for their race.
 When the lion was young,
 In the pride of his might,
 Then 't was sport for the strong
 To embrace him in fight ;
 To go forth with a pine
 For a spear, 'gainst the mammoth,
 Or strike through the ravine
 At the foaming behemoth ;
 While man was in stature
 As towers in our time,
 The first-born of Nature,
 And, like her, sublime !

Chorus.

But the wars are over,
 The spring is come ;
 The bride and her lover
 Have sought their home !
 They are happy, and we rejoice ;
 Let their hearts have an echo from every voice !
 [*Exeunt the Peasantry, singing.*]

Hebrew Melodies.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE subsequent poems were written at the request of my friend, the Honble. Douglas Kinnaird, for a Selection of Hebrew Melodies, and have been published, with the music, arranged by Mr. Braham and Mr. Nathan.

January, 1815.

SHE WALKS IN BEAUTY.

I.

SHE walks in beauty, like the night
Of cloudless climes and starry skies ;
And all that's best of dark and bright
Meet in her aspect and her eyes :
Thus mellow'd to that tender light
Which heaven to gaudy day denies.

II.

One shade the more, one ray the less,
Had half impair'd the nameless grace
Which waves in every raven tress,
Or softly lightens o'er her face ;
Where thoughts serenely sweet express
How pure, how dear their dwelling-place.

III.

And on that cheek, and o'er that brow,
So soft, so calm, yet eloquent,
The smiles that win, the tints that glow,
But tell of days in goodness spent,
A mind at peace with all below,
A heart whose love is innocent !

THE HARP THE MONARCH MINSTREL SWEPT.

I.

THE harp the monarch minstrel swept,
 The King of men, the loved of Heaven,
 Which Music hallow'd while she wept
 O'er tones her heart of hearts had given,
 Redoubled be her tears, its chords are riven !
 It soften'd men of iron mould,
 It gave them virtues not their own ;
 No ear so dull, no soul so cold,
 That felt not, fired not to the tone,
 Till David's lyre grew mightier than his throne !

II.

It told the triumphs of our King,
 It wasted glory to our God ;
 It made our gladden'd valleys ring,
 The cedars bow, the mountains nod ;
 Its sound aspired to heaven and there abode !
 Since then, though heard on earth no more,
 Devotion and her daughter Love
 Still hid the bursting spirit soar
 To sounds that seem as from above,
 In dreams that day's broad light can not remove.

IF THAT HIGH WORLD.

I.

IF that high world, which lies beyond
 • Our own, surviving Love endears ;
 If there the cherish'd heart be fond,
 The eye the same, except in tears—
 How welcome those untrodden spheres !
 How sweet this very hour to die !
 To soar from earth and find all fears
 Lost in thy light—Eternity !

II.

It must be so : 't is not for self
 That we so tremble on the brink ;

And striving to o'erleap the gulf,
 Yet cling to Being's severing link.
 Oh ! in that future let us think
 To hold each heart the heart that shares ;
 With them the immortal waters drink,
 And soul in soul grow deathless theirs !

THE WILD GAZELLE.

I.

THE wild gazelle on Judah's hills
 Exulting yet may bound,
 And drink from all the living rills
 That gush on holy ground :
 Its airy step and glorious eye
 May glance in tameless transport by :—

II.

A step as fleet, an eye more bright,
 Hath Judah witness'd there ;
 And o'er her scenes of lost delight
 Inhabitants more fair.
 The cedars wave on Lebanon,
 But Judah's statelier maids are gone !

III.

More blest each palm that shades those plains
 Than Israel's scatter'd race ;
 For, taking root, it there remains
 In solitary grace :
 It cannot quit its place of birth,
 It will not live in other earth.

IV.

But we must wander witheringly,
 In other lands to die ;
 And where our fathers' ashes be,
 Our own may never lie :
 Our temple hath not left a stone,
 And Mockery sits on Salem's throne.

OH ! WEEP FOR THOSE.

OH ! weep for those that wept by Babel's stream,
 Whose shrines are desolate, whose land a dream ;
 Weep for the harp of Judah's broken shell ;
 Mourn—where their God hath dwelt the godless dwell !

II.

And where shall Israel lave her bleeding feet ?
 And when shall Zion's songs again seem sweet ;
 And Judah's melody once more rejoice
 The hearts that leap'd before its heavenly voice ?

III.

Tribes of the wandering foot and weary breast,
 How shall ye flee away and be at rest !
 The wild-dove hath her nest, the fox his cave,
 Mankind their country—Israel but the grave !

ON JORDAN'S BANKS.

I.

ON Jordan's banks the Arab's camels stray,
 On Sion's hill the False One's votaries pray,
 The Baal-adorer bows on Sinai's steep—
 Yet there—even there—Oh God ! thy thunders sleep :

II.

There—where thy finger scorch'd the tablet stone !
 There—where thy shadow to thy people shone !
 Thy glory shrouded in its garb of fire :
 Thyself—none living see and not expire !

III.

Oh ! in the lightning let thy glance appear ;
 Sweep from his shiver'd hand the oppressor's spear !
 How long by tyrants shall thy land be trod ?
 How long thy temple worshipless, Oh God ?

JEPHTHA'S DAUGHTER.

I.

SINCE our Country, our God—Oh, my Sire !
 Demand that thy Daughter expire ;
 Since thy triumph was bought by thy vow,
 Strike the bosom that's bared for thee now !

II.

And the voice of my mourning is o'er,
 And the mountains behold me no more :
 If the hand that I love lay me low,
 There cannot be pain in the blow !

III.

And of this, oh, my Father ! be sure—
 That the blood of thy child is as pure
 As the blessing I beg ere it flow,
 And the last thought that soothes me below.

IV.

Though the virgins of Salem lament,
 Be the judge and the hero unbent !
 I have won the great battle for thee,
 And my Father and Country are free !

V.

When this blood of thy giving hath gush'd,
 When the voice that thou lovest is hush'd,
 Let my memory still be thy pride,
 And forget not I smiled as I died !

9

OH ! SNATCH'D AWAY IN BEAUTY'S BLOOM.

I.

OH ! snatch'd away in beauty's bloom,
 On thee shall press no ponderous tomb ;
 But on thy turf shall roses rear
 Their leaves, the earliest of the year ;
 And the wild cypress wave in tender gloom :

II.

And oft by yon blue gushing stream
 Shall Sorrow lean her drooping head,
 And feed deep thought with many a dream,
 And lingering pause and lightly tread ;
 Fond wretch ! as if her step disturb'd the dead.

III.

Away ! we know that tears are vain,
 That death nor heeds nor hears distress :
 Will this unteach us to complain ?
 Or make one mourner weep the less ?
 And thou—who tell'st me to forget,
 Thy looks are wan, thine eyes are wet.

MY SOUL IS DARK.

I.

My soul is dark—Oh ! quickly string
 The harp I yet can brook to hear ;
 And let thy gentle fingers fling
 Its melting murmurs o'er mine ear.
 If in this heart a hope be dear,
 That sound shall charm it forth again ;
 If in these eyes there lurk a tear,
 'T will flow, and cease to burn my brain.

II.

But bid the strain be wild and deep,
 Nor let thy notes of joy be first :
 I tell thee, minstrel, I must weep,
 Or else this heavy heart will burst ;
 For it hath been by sorrow nursed,
 And ached in sleepless silence long ;
 And now 't is doom'd to know the worst,
 And break at once—or yield to song.

I SAW THEE WEEP.

I.

I saw thee weep—the big bright tear
Came o'er that eye of blue ;
And then methought it did appear
A violet dropping dew ;
I saw thee smile—the sapphire's blaze
Beside thee ceased to shine ;
It could not match the living rays
That fill'd that glance of thine.

II.

As clouds from yonder sun receive
A deep and mellow dye,
Which scarce the shade of coming eve
Can banish from the sky,
Those smiles unto the moodiest mind
Their own pure joy impart ;
Their sunshine leaves a glow behind
That lightens o'er the heart.

THY DAYS ARE DONE.

I.

THY days are done, thy fame begun ;
Thy country's strains record
The triumphs of her chosen Son,
The slaughters of his sword !
The deeds he did, the fields he won,
The freedom he restored !

II.

Though thou art fall'n, while we are free
Thou shalt not taste of death !
The generous blood that flow'd from thee
Disdain'd to sink beneath :
Within our veins its currents be,
Thy spirit on our breath !

III.

Thy name, our charging hosts along,
 Shall be the battle-word !
 Thy fall, the theme of choral song
 From virgin voices pour'd !
 To weep would do thy glory wrong :
 Thou shalt not be deplored.

SAUL.

I.

THOU whose spell can raise the dead,
 Bid the prophet's form appear.
 "Samuel, raise thy buried head !
 King, behold the phantom seer !"
 Earth yawn'd ; he stood the centre of a cloud :
 Light changed its hue, retiring from his shroud.
 Death stood all glassy in his fixed eye ;
 His hand was wither'd, and his veins were dry ;
 His foot, in bony whiteness, glitter'd there,
 Shrunken and sinewless, and ghastly bare ;
 From lips that moved not and unbreathing frame,
 Like cavern'd winds, the hollow accents came.
 Saul saw, and fell to earth, as falls the oak,
 At once, and blasted by the thunder-stroke.

II.

Why is my sleep disquieted ?
 Who is he that calls the dead ?
 Is it thou, O King ? Behold, •
 Bloodless are these limbs, and cold :
 Such are mine ; and such shall be
 Thine to-morrow, when with me :
 Ere the coming day is done,
 Such shalt thou be, such thy son.
 Fare thee well, but for a day,
 Then we mix our mouldering clay.
 Thou, thy race, lie pale and low,
 Pierced by shafts of many a bow ;

And the falchion by thy side
 To thy heart thy hand shall guide :
 Crownless, breathless, headless fall,
 Son and sire, the house of Saul !”

SONG OF SAUL BEFORE HIS LAST BATTLE.

I.

WARRIORS and chiefs ! should the shaft or the sword
 Pierce me in leading the host of the Lord,
 Heed not the corse, though a king's, in your path :
 Bury your steel in the bosoms of Gath !

II.

Thou who art bearing my buckler and bow,
 Should the soldiers of Saul look away from the foe,
 Stretch me that moment in blood at thy feet !
 Mine be the doom which they dared not to meet.

III.

Farewell to others, but never we part,
 Heir to my royalty, son of my heart !
 Bright is the diadem, boundless the sway,
 Or kingly the death, which awaits us to-day !

“ALL IS VANITY, SAITH THE PREACHER.”

I.

FAME, wisdom, love, and power were mine,
 And health and youth possess'd me ;
 My goblets blush'd from every vine,
 And lo-ely forms caress'd me ;
 I sunn'd my heart in beauty's eyes,
 And felt my soul grow tender ;
 All earth can give, or mortal prize,
 Was mine of regal splendour.

II.

I strive to number o'er what days
Remembrance can discover,
Which all that life or earth displays
Would lure me to live over.
There rose no day, there roll'd no hour
Of pleasure unembitter'd ;
And not a trapping deck'd my power
That gall'd not while it glitter'd.

III.

The serpent of the field, by art
And spells, is won from harming ;
But that which coils around the heart,
Oh ! who hath power of charming ?
It will not list to wisdom's-lore,
Nor music's voice can lure it ;
But there it stings for evermore
The soul that must endure it.

WHEN COLDNESS WRAPS THIS SUFFERING CLAY.

I.

WHEN coldness wraps this suffering clay,
Ah ! whither strays the immortal mind ?
It cannot die, it cannot stay,
But leaves its darken'd dust behind.
Then, unembodied, doth it trace
By steps each planet's heavenly way ?
Or till at once the realms of space,
A thing of eyes that all survey ?

II.

Eternal, boundless, undecay'd,
A thought unseen, but seeing all,
All, all in earth or skies display'd,
Shall it survey, shall it recall :
Each fainter trace that memory hold :
So darkly of departed years,
In one broad glance the soul beholds,
And all, that was, at once appears.

III.

Before Creation peopled earth,
 Its eye shall roll through chaos back;
 And where the furthest heaven had birth,
 The spirit trace its rising track.
 And where the future mays or makes,
 Its glance dilate o'er all to be,
 While sun is quench'd or system breaks,
 Fix'd in its own eternity.

IV.

Above or Love, Hope, Hate, or Fear,
 It lives all passionless and pure:
 An age shall fleet like earthly year;
 Its years as moments shall endure.
 Away, away, without a wing,
 O'er all, through all, its thought shall fly,
 A nameless and eternal thing,
 Forgetting what it was to die.

VISION OF BELSHAZZAR.

I.

THE King was on his throne,
 The Satraps throng'd the hall:
 A thousand bright lamps shone
 O'er that high festival.
 A thousand cups of gold,
 In Judah deem'd divine—
 Jehovah's vessels hold
 The godless Heather's wine!

II.

In that same hour and hall,
 The fingers of a hand
 Came forth against the wall,
 And wrote as if on sand:
 The fingers of a man;
 A solitary hand
 Along the letters ran,
 And traced them like a wand.

III.

The monarch saw, and shook,
And bade no more rejoice ;
All bloodless wax'd his look,
And tremulous his voice.
"Let the men of lore appear,
The wisest of the earth,
And expound the words of fear,
Which mar our royal mirth."

IV.

Chaldea's seers are good,
But here they have no skill ;
And the unknown letters stood
Untold and awful still.
And Babel's men of age
Are wise and deep in lore ;
But now they were not sage,
They saw—but knew no more.

V.

A captive in the land,
A stranger and a youth,
He heard the king's command,
He saw that writing's truth.
The lamps around were bright,
The prophecy in view ;
He read it on that night,—
The morrow proved it true.

VI.

"Belshazzar's grave is made,
His kingdom pass'd away,
He in the balance weigh'd,
Is light and worthless clay ;
The shroud his robe of state,
His canopy the stone ;
The Mede is at his gate !
The Persian on his throne !"

SUN OF THE SLEEPLESS!

SUN of the sleepless ! melancholy star !
 Whose tearful beam glows tremulously far !
 That show'st the darkness thou canst not dispel,
 How like art thou to joy remember'd well !
 So gleams the past, the light of other days,
 Which shines, but warms not with its powerless rays ;
 A night-beam Sorrow watcheth to behold,
 Distinct, but distant—clear—but, oh how cold !

WERE MY BOSOM AS FALSE AS THOU
DEEM'ST IT TO BE.

I.

WERE my bosom as false as thou deem'st it to be,
 I need not have wander'd from far Galilee ;
 It was but abjuring my creed to efface
 The curse which thou say'st, is the crime of my race.

II.

If the bad never triumph, then God is with thee !
 If the slave only sin, thou art spotless and free !
 If the Exile on earth is an Outcast on high,
 Live on in thy faith, but in mine I will die.

III.

I have lost for that faith more than thou canst bestow,
 As the God who permits thee to prosper doth know ;
 In his hand is my heart and my hope—and in thine
 The land and the life which for him I resign.

HEROD'S LAMENT FOR MARIAMNE.

I.

OH, Mariamne ! now for thee
 The heart for which thou bled'st is bleeding ;
 Revenge is lost in agony,
 And wild remorse to rage succeeding.

Oh, Mariamne ! where art thou ?
 Thou canst not hear my bitter pleading :
 Ah ! could'st thou—thou would'st pardon now,
 Though Heaven were to my prayer unheeding.

*
 . II.

And is she dead ?—and did they dare
 Obey my frenzy's jealous raving ?
 My wrath but doom'd my own despair :
 The sword that smote her 's o'er me waving—
 But thou art cold, my murder'd love !
 And this dark heart is vainly craving
 For her who soars alone above,
 And leaves my soul unworthy saving.

III.

She's gone, who shared my diadem ;
 She sunk, with her my joys entombing ;
 I swept that flower from Judah's stem,
 Whose leaves for me alone were blooming ;
 And mine 's the guilt, and mine the hell,
 'This bosom's desolation dooming ;
 And I have earn'd those tortures well,
 Which unconsumed are still consuming !

ON THE DAY OF THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM BY TITUS.

I.

FROM the last Hill that looks on thy once holy dome,
 I beheld thee, oh Sion ! when render'd to Rome :
 'T was thy last sun went down, and the flames of thy fall
 Flash'd back on the last glance I gave to thy wall.

II.

I look'd for thy temple, I look'd for my home,
 And forgot for a moment my bondage to come ;
 I beheld but the death-fire that fed on thy fane,
 And the fast-fetter'd hands that made vengeance in vain.

III.

On many an eve, the high spot whence I gazed
 Had reflected the last beam of day as it blazed ;
 While I stood on the height, and beheld the decline
 Of the rays from the mountain that shone on thy shrine.

IV.

And now on that mountain I stood on that day,
 But I mark'd not the twilight beam melting away ;
 Oh ! would that the lightning had glared in its stead,
 And the thunderbolt burst on the conqueror's head !

V.

But the gods of the Pagan shall never profane
 The shrine where Jehovah disdair'd not to reign !
 And scatter'd and scorn'd as thy people may be,
 Our worship, oh Father ! is only for Thee.

BY THE RIVERS OF BABYLON WE SAT DOWN
 AND WEPT.

I.

We sat down and wept by the waters
 Of Babel, and thought of the day
 When our foe, in the hue of his slaughters,
 Made Salem's high places his prey ;
 And ye, oh her desolate daughters !
 Were scatter'd all weeping away.

II.

While sadly we gazed on the river
 Which roll'd on in freedom below,
 They demanded the song ; but, oh never
 That triumph the stranger shall know !
 May this right hand be wither'd for ever,
 Ere it string our high harp for the foe !

III.

On the willow that harp is suspended,
 Oh, Salem ! its sound should be free ;

And the hour when thy glories were ended
But left me that token of thee :
And ne'er shall its soft tones be blended
With the voice of the spoiler by me !

THE DESTRUCTION OF SENNACHERIB.

I.

THE Assyrian came down like a wolf on the fold,
And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold ;
And the sheen of their spears was like stars on the sea,
When the blue wave rolls lightly on deep Galilee.

II.

Like the leaves of the forest when Summer is green,
That host with their banners at sunset were seen :
Like the leaves of the forest when Autumn hath blown,
That host on the morrow lay wither'd and strown.

III.

For the Angel of Death spread his wings on the blast,
And breathed in the face of the foe as he pass'd ;
And the eyes of the sleepers wax'd deadly and chill,
And their hearts but once heaved, and for ever grew still !

IV.

And there lay the steed with his nostril all wide,
But through it there roll'd not the breath of his pride :
And the foam of his gasping lay white on the turf,
And cold as the spray of the rock-beating surf.

V.

And there lay the rider distorted and pale,
With the dew on his brow, and the rust on his mail :
And the tents were all silent, the banners alone,
The lances unlifted, the trumpet unblown.

VI.

And the widows of Ashur are loud in their wail,
And the idols are broke in the temple of Baal ;
And the might of the Gentile, unsnотe by the sword,
Hath melted like snow in the glance of the Lord !

A SPIRIT PASS'D BEFORE ME.

FROM JOB.

I.

A SPIRIT pass'd before me : I beheld
The face of immortality unveil'd—
Deep sleep came down on every eye save mine—
And there it stood, all formless—but divine :
Along my bones the creeping flesh did quake ;
And as my damp hair stiffen'd, thus it spake :

II.

“ Is man more just than God ? Is man more pure
Than he who deems even Seraph's insecure ?
Creatures of clay—vain dwellers in the dust !
The moth survives you, and are ye more just ?
Things of a day ! you wither ere the night,
Heedless and blind to Wisdom's wasted light ! ”

Poems to Thyra.

TO THYRZA.

WITHOUT a stone to mark the spot,
And say, what Truth might well have said,
By all, save one, perchance forgot,
Ah ! wherefore art thou lowly laid ?

By many a shore and many a sea
Divided, yet beloved in vain ;
The past, the future fled to thee,
To bid us meet—no—ne'er again !

Could this have been—a word, a look,
That softly said, “ We part in peace,”
Had taught my bosom how to brook,
With fainter sighs, thy soul's release.

And didst thou not, since Death for thee
Prepared a light and pangless dart,
Once long for him thou ne'er shalt see,
Who held, and holds thee in his heart ?

Oh ! who like him had watch'd thee here ?
Or sadly mark'd thy glazing eye,
In that dread hour ere Death appear,
When silent sorrow fears to sigh,

Till all was past ? But when no more
'T was thine to reck of human woe,
Affection's heart-drops, gushing o'er,
Had flow'd as fast—as now they flow.

Shall they not flow, when many a day
In these, to me, deserted towers,
Ere call'd but for a time away,
Affection's mingling tears were ours ?

Ours too the glance none saw beside ;
 The smile none else might understand,
 The whisper'd thought of hearts allied,
 The pressure of the thrilling hand ;

The kiss, so guiltless and refined,
 That Love each warmer wish forbore ;
 Those eyes proclaim'd so pure a mind,
 Even Passion blush'd to plead for more.

The tone, that taught me to rejoice,
 When prone, unlike thee, to feign ;
 The song, celestial from thy voice,
 But sweet to me from none but thine ;

The pledge we wore—I wear it still,
 But where is thine?—Ah ! where art thou ?
 Oft have I borne the weight of ill,
 But never bent beneath till now !

Well hast thou left in life's best bloom
 The cup of woe for me to drain.
 If rest alone be in the tomb,
 I would not wish thee here again.

But if in worlds more blest than this
 Thy virtues seek a fitter sphere,
 Impart some portion of thy bliss,
 To wean me from mine anguish here.

Teach me—too early taught by thee !
 To bear, forgiving and forgiven ;
 On earth thy love was such to me ;
 It fain would form my hope in heaven !

October 11, 1811.

AWAY, AWAY, YE NOTES OF WOE !

Away, away, ye notes of woe !
 Be silent, thou once soothing strain,
 Or I must flee from hence—for, oh !
 I dare not trust those sounds again.

To me they speak of brighter days—
 But lull the chords, for now, alas!
 I must not think, I may not gaze,
 On what I am—on what I was.

The voice that made those sounds more sweet
 Is hush'd, and all their charms are fled;
 And now their softest notes repeat
 A dirge, an anthem o'er the dead!
 Yes, Thyrza! yes, they breathe of thee,
 Beloved dust! since dust thou art;
 And all that once was harmony
 Is worse than discord to my heart!

'T is silent all!—but on my ear
 The well remember'd echoes thrill;
 I hear a voice I would not hear,
 A voice that now might well be still:
 Yet oft my doubting soul 't will shake;
 • Even slumber owns its gentle tone,
 Till consciousness will vainly wake
 To listen, though the dream be flown.

Sweet Thyrza! waking as in sleep,
 Thou art but now a lovely dream;
 A star that trembled o'er the deep,
 Then turn'd from earth its tender beam.
 But he who through life's dreary way
 Must pass, when heaven is veil'd in wrath,
 Will long lament the vanish'd ray
 That scatter'd gladness o'er his path.

December 6, 1811.

ONE STRUGGLE MORE, AND I AM FREE.

ONE struggle more, and I am free
 From pangs that rend my heart in twain;
 One last long sigh to love and thee,
 Then back to busy life again.
 It suits me well to mingle now
 With things that never pleased before:
 Though every joy is fled below,
 What future grief can touch me more?

Then bring me wine, the banquet bring ;
 Man was not form'd to live alone :
 I'll be that light, unmeaning thing
 That smiles with all, and weeps with none.
 It was not thus in days more dear,
 It never would have been, but thou
 Hast fled, and left me lonely here ;
 Thou 'rt nothing—all are nothing now.

In vain my lyre would lightly breathe !
 The smile that sorrow fain would wear
 But mocks the woe that lurks beneath,
 Like roses o'er a sepulchre.
 Though gay companions o'er the bowl
 Dispel awhile the sense of ill :
 Though pleasure fires the maddening soul,
 The heart,—the heart is lonely still !

On many a lone and lovely night
 It soothed to gaze upon the sky ;
 For then I deem'd the heavenly light
 Shone sweetly on thy pensive eye :
 And oft I thought at Cynthia's noon,
 When sailing o'er the Ægean wave,
 " Now Thyrza gazes on that moon "—
 Alas, it gleam'd upon her grave !

When stretch'd on fever's sleepless bed,
 And sickness shrunk my throbbing veins,
 "'T is comfort still," I faintly said,
 " That Thyrza cannot know my pains : "
 Like freedom to the time-worn slave,
 A boon 't is idle then to give,
 Relenting Nature vainly gave
 My life, when Thyrza ceased to live !

My Thyrza's pledge in better days,
 When love and life alike were new !
 How different now thou meet'st my gaze !
 How tinged by time with sorrow's hue !
 The heart that gave itself with thee
 Is silent—ah, were mine as still !
 Though cold as e'en the dead can be,
 It feels, it sickens with the chill.

Thou bitter pledge ! thou mournful token !
 Though painful, welcome to my breast !
 Still, still preserve that love unbroken,
 Or break the heart to which thou 'rt press'd.
 Time tempers love, but not removes,
 • More hallow'd when its hope is fled :
 Oh ! what are thousand living loves
 To that which cannot quit the dead ?

EUTHANASIA.

WHEN Time, or soon or late, shall bring
 The dreamless sleep that lulls the dead,
 Oblivion ! may thy languid wing
 Wave gently o'er my dying bed !

No band of friends or heirs be there,
 To weep, or wish, the coming blow :
 No maiden, with dishevelled hair,
 To feel, or feign, decorous woe.

But silent let me sink to earth,
 With no officious mourners near :
 I would not hear one hour of mirth,
 Nor startle friendship with a tear.

Yet Love, if Love in such an hour
 Could nobly check its useless sighs,
 Might then exert its latest power
 In her who lives, and him who dies.

'T were sweet, my Psyche ! to the last
 Thy features still serene to see :
 Forgetful of its struggles past,
 • Even Pain itself should smile on thee.

But vain the wish—for Beauty still
 Will shrink, as shrinks the ebbing breath
 And women's tears produced at will,
 Deceive in life, unman in death.

Then lonely be my latest hour,
 Without regret, without a groan !
 For thousands Death hath ceased to lower,
 And pain been transient or unknown,

"Ay, but to die, and go," alas !
 Where all have gone, and all must go !
 To be the nothing that I was
 Ere born to life and living woe !
 Count o'er the joys thine hours have seen,
 Count o'er thy days from 'anguish free,
 And know, whatever thou hast been,
 'T is something better not to be.

AND THOU ART DEAD, AS YOUNG AND FAIR.

"Heu, quanto minus est cum reliquis versari quam tui meminisse !"

AND thou art dead, as young and fair
 As aught of mortal birth ;
 And form so soft, and charms so rare,
 Too soon return'd to Earth !
 Though Earth received them in her bed,
 And o'er the spot the crowd may tread
 In carelessness or mirth,
 There is an eye which could not brook
 A moment on that grave to look.

I will not ask where thou liest low,
 Nor gaze upon the spot :
 There flowers or weeds at will may grow,
 So I behold them not :
 It is enough for me to prove
 That what I loved, and long must love,
 Like common earth can rot ;
 To me there needs no stone to tell,
 'T is Nothing that I loved so well.

Yet did I love thee to the last
 As fervently as thou,
 Who didst not change through all the past,
 And canst not alter now.
 The love where Death has set his seal,
 Nor age can chill, nor rival steal,
 Nor falsehood disavow ;

And, what were worse, thou canst not see
Or wrong, or change, or fault in me.

The better days of life were ours ;
The worst can be but mine :
The sun that cheers, the storm that lowers,
Shall never more be thine.
The silence of that dreamless sleep
I envy now too much to weep ;
Nor need I to repine,
That all those charms have pass'd away ;
I might have watch'd through long decay.

The flower in ripen'd bloom unmatched
Must fall the earliest prey ;
Though by no hand untimely snatch'd,
The leaves must drop away :
And yet it were a greater grief
To watch it withering, leaf by leaf,
'Than see it pluck'd to-day ;
Since earthly eye but ill can bear
To trace the change to foul from fair.

I know not if I could have borne
To see thy beauties fade ;
The night that follow'd such a morn
Had worn a deeper shade :
Thy day without a cloud hath pass'd,
And thou wert lovely to the last ;
Extinguish'd, not decay'd ;
As stars that shoot along the sky
Shine brightest as they fall from high.

As once I wept, if I could weep,
My tears might well be shed,
To think I was not near to keep
One vigil o'er thy bed ;
To gaze, how fondly ! on thy face,
To fold thee in a faint embrace,
Uphold thy drooping head ;
And show that love, however vain,
Nor thou nor I can feel again.

Yet how much less it were to gain,
 Though thou hast left me free,
 The loveliest things that still remain,
 Than thus remember thee !
 The all of thine that cannot die
 Through dark and dread Eternity
 Returns again to me,
 And more thy buried love endears
 Than aught, except its living years.

February, 1812.

IF SOMETIMES IN THE HAUNTS OF MEN.

If sometimes in the haunts of men
 Thine image from my breast may fade,
 The lonely hour presents again
 The semblance of thy gentle shade :
 And now that sad and silent hour
 Thus much of thee can still restore,
 And sorrow unobserved may pour
 The plaint she dare not speak before.

Oh, pardon that in crowds awhile
 I waste one thought I owe to thee,
 And self-condemn'd appear to smile,
 Unfaithful to thy memory :
 Nor deem that memory less dear,
 That then I seem not to repine ;
 I would not fools should overhear :
 One sigh that should be wholly *thine*.

If not the goblet pass unquaff'd,
 It is not drain'd to banish care ;
 The cup must hold a deadlier draught,
 That brings a Lethe for despair.
 And could Oblivion set my soul
 From all her troubled visions free,
 I'd dash to earth the sweetest bowl
 That drown'd a single thought of thee.

For wert thou vanish'd from my mind,
 Where could my vacant bosom turn ?

And who would then remain behind
To honour thine abandon'd Urn?
No, no—it is my sorrow's pride
That last dear duty to fulfil:
Though all the world forget beside,
'T is meet that I remember still.

For well I know, that such had been
Thy gentle care for him, who now
Unmourn'd shall quit this mortal scene,
Where none regarded him, but thou:
And, oh! I feel in *that* was given
A blessing never meant for me;
Thou wert too like a dream of Heaven
For earthly Love to merit thee.

March 14, 1812.

Domestic Nieces.

1816.

FARE THEE WELL.

"Alas ! they had been friends in youth ;
But whispering tongues can poison truth ;
And constancy lives in realms above ;
And life is thorny ; and youth is vain ;
And to be wroth with one we love,
Doth work like madness in the brain ;

* * * * *

But never either found another
To free the hollow heart from paining—
They stood aloof, the scars remaining,
Like cliffs which had been rent asunder ;
A dreary sea now flows between,
But neither heat, nor frost, nor thunder,
Shall wholly do away, I ween,
The marks of that which once hath been."

COLERIDGE'S *Christabel*.

FARE thee well ! and if for ever,
Still for ever, fare thee well :
Even though unforgiving, never
'Gainst thee shall my heart rebel.

Would that breast were bared before thee
Where thy head so oft hath lain,
While that placid sleep came o'er thee
Which thou ne'er canst know again :

Would that breast, by thee glanced over,
Every inmost thought could show !
Then thou wouldst at last discover
"T was not well to spurn it so.

Though the world for this commend thee—
Though it smile upon the blow,
Even its praises must offend thee,
Founded on another's woe :

Though my many faults defaced me,
Could no other arm be found,
Than the one which once embraced me,
To inflict a cureless wound ?

Yet, oh yet, thyself deceive not ;
Love may sink by slow decay,
But by sudden wrench, believe not
Hearts can thus be torn away :

Still thine own life retaineth,
Still must mine, though bleeding, beat ;
And the undying thought which paineth
Is—that we no more may meet.

These are words of deeper sorrow
Than the wail above the dead ;
Both shall live, but every morrow
Wake us from a widow'd bed.

And when thou wouldst solace gather,
When our child's first accents flow,
Wilt thou teach her to say " Father !"
Though his care she must forego ?

When her little hand shall press thee,
When her lip to thine is press'd,
Think of him whose prayer shall bless thee,
Think of him thy love had bless'd !

Should her lineaments resemble
Those thou never more may'st see,
Then thy heart will softly tremble
With a pulse yet true to me.

All my faults perchance thou knowest,
All my madness none can know ;
All my hopes, where'er thou goest,
Wither, yet with *thee* they go.

Every feeling hath been shaken;
 Pride, which not a world could bow,
 Bows to thee—by thee forsaken,
 Even my soul forsakes me now:

But 't is done—all words are idle—
 Words from me are vainer still;
 But the thoughts we cannot bridle
 Force their way without the will.

Fare thee well! thus disunited,
 Torn from every nearer tie,
 Sear'd in heart, and lone, and blighted,
 More than this I scarce can die.

March 17, 1816.

A SKETCH.

“Honest—honest Iago!
 If that thou be'st a devil, I cannot kill thee.”

SHAKESPEARE.

BORN in the garret, in the kitchen bred,
 Promoted thence to deck her mistress' head;
 Next—for some gracious service unexpress'd,
 And from its wages only to be guess'd—
 Raised from the toilette to the table,—where
 Her wondering betters wait behind her chair.
 With eye unmoved, and forehead unabash'd,
 She dines from off the plate she lately wash'd.
 Quick with the tale, and ready with the lie,
 The genial confidante, and general spy,
 Who could, ye gods! her next employment guess—
 An only infant's earliest governess!
 She taught the child to read, and taught so well,
 That she herself, by teaching, learn'd to spell.
 An adept next in penmanship she grows,
 As many a nameless slander deftly shows:
 What she had made the pupil of her art,
 None know—but that high Soul secured the heart,
 And panted for the truth it could not hear,
 With longing breath and undeluded ear.
 Foil'd was perversion by that youthful mind,
 Which Flattery fool'd not, Baseness could not blind,

Deceit infect not, near Contagion soil,
 Indulgence weaken, nor Example spoil,
 Nor master'd Science tempt her to look down
 On humbler talents with a pitying frown,
 Nor Genius swell, nor Beauty render vain,
 Nor Envy ruffle to retaliate pain,
 Nor Fortune change, Pride raise, nor Passion bow,
 Nor Virtue teach austerity—till now.
 Serenely purest of her sex that live,
 But wanting one sweet weakness—to forgive,
 Too shock'd at faults her soul can never know,
 She deems that all could be like her below:
 Foe to all vice, yet hardly Virtue's friend,
 For Virtue pardons those she would amend.

But to the theme, now laid aside too long,
 The baleful burthen of this honest song,
 Though all her former functions are no more,
 She rules the circle which she served before.
 If mothers—none know why—before her quake;
 If daughters dread her for the mothers' sake;
 If early habits—those false links, which bind
 At times the loftiest to the meanest mind—
 Have given her power too deeply to instil
 The angry essence of her deadly will;
 If like a snake she steals within your walls,
 Till the black slime betray her as she crawls;
 If like a viper to the heart she wind,
 And leave the venom there she did not find;
 What marvel that this hag of hatred works
 Eternal evil latent as she lurks,
 To make a Pandemonium where she dwells,
 And reign the Hecate of domestic hells?
 Skill'd by a touch to deepen scandal's tints
 With all the kind mendacity of hints,
 While mingling truth with falsehood, sneers with smiles,
 A thread of candour with a web of wiles:
 A plain blunt show of briefly-spoken seeming,
 To hide her bloodless heart's soul-harden'd scheming;
 A lip of lies; a face form'd to conceal,
 And, without feeling, mock at all who feel:
 With a vile mask the Gorgon would disown,—
 A cheek of parchment, and an eye of stone.

Mark, how the channels of her yellow blood
 Ooze to her skin, and stagnate there to mud,
 Cased like the centipede in saffron mail,
 Or darker greenness of the scorpion's scale—
 (For drawn from reptiles only may we trace
 Congenial colours in that soul or face)—
 Look on her features! and behold her mind
 As in a mirror of itself defined :
 Look on the picture! deem it not o'ercharged—
 There is no trait which might not be enlarged :
 Yet true to "Nature's journeymen," who made
 This monster when their mistress left off trade—
 This female dog-star of her little sky,
 Where all beneath her influence droop or die.

Oh! wretch without a tear—without a thought,
 Save joy above the ruin thou hast wrought—
 The time shall come, nor long remote, when thou
 Shalt feel far more than thou inflictest now ;
 Feel for thy vile self-loving self in vain,
 And turn thee howling in unpitied pain.
 May the strong curse of crush'd affections light
 Back on thy bosom with reflected blight !
 And make thee in thy leprosy of mind
 As loathsome to thyself as to mankind !
 Till all thy self-thoughts curdle into hate,
 Black—as thy will for others would create :
 Till thy hard heart be calcined into dust,
 And thy soul wetter in its hideous crust.
 Oh, may thy grave be sleepless as the bed,
 The widow'd couch of fire, that thou hast spread !
 Then, when thou fain wouldst weary Heaven with prayer,
 Look on thine earthly victims—and despair !
 Down to the dust!—and, as thou rot'st away,
 Even worms shall perish on thy poisonous clay.
 But for the love I bore, and still must bear,
 To her thy malice from all ties would tear—
 Thy name—thy human name—to every eye
 The climax of all scorn should hang on high,
 Exalted o'er thy less abhorr'd compeers—
 And festering in the infamy of years.

March 29, 1816.

ENDORSEMENT TO THE DEED OF SEPARATION.

IN THE APRIL OF 1816.

A YEAR ago, you swore, fond she !
"To love, to honour," and so forth :
Such was the vow you pledged to me,
And here 's exactly what 't is worth.

STANZAS TO AUGUSTA.

I.

WHEN all around grew drear and dark,
And reason half withheld her ray—
And hope but shed a dying spark
Which more misled my lonely way ;

II.

In that deep midnight of the mind,
And that internal strife of heart,
When dreading to be deem'd too kind,
The weak despair—the cold depart ;

III.

When fortune changed—and love fled far,
And hatred's shafts flew thick and fast,
Thou wert the solitary star
Which rose and set not to the last.

IV.

Oh ! blest be thine unbroken light !
That watch'd me as a seraph's eye,
And stood between me and the night,
For ever shining sweetly nigh.

V.

And when the cloud upon us came,
Which strove to blacken o'er thy ray—
Then purer spread its gentle flame,
And dash'd the darkness all away.

DOMESTIC PIECES.

VI.

Still may thy spirit dwell on mine,
 And teach it what to brave or brook—
 There's more in one soft word of thine
 Than in the world's defied rebuke.

VII.

Thou stood'st, as stands a lovely tree,
 That still unbroke, though gently bent,
 Still waves with fond fidelity
 Its boughs above a monument.

VIII.

The winds might rend—the skies might pour,
 But there thou wert—and still wouldst be
 Devoted in the stormiest hour
 To shed thy weeping leaves o'er me.

IX.

But thou and thine shall know no blight,
 Whatever fate on me may fall ;
 For heaven in sunshine will requite
 The kind—and thee the most of all.

X.

Then let the ties of baffled love
 Be broken—thine will never break ;
 Thy heart can feel—but will not move ;
 Thy soul, though soft, will never shake.

XI.

And these, when all was lost beside,
 Were found and still are fix'd in thee ;—
 And bearing still a breast so tried,
 Earth is no desert—ev'n to me.

STANZAS TO AUGUSTA.

I.

THOUGH the day of my destiny's over,
 And the star of my fate hath declined,
 Thy soft heart refused to discover,
 The faults which so many could find ;

Though thy soul with my grief was acquainted,
 It shrunk not to share it with me,
 And the love which my spirit hath painted
 It never hath found but in *thee*.

. II.

Then when nature around me is smiling,
 The last smile which answers to mine,
 I do not believe it beguiling,
 Because it reminds me of thine ;
 And when winds are at war with the ocean,
 As the breasts I believed in with me,
 If their billows excite an emotion,
 It is that they bear me from *thee*.

III.

Though the rock of my last hope is shiver'd,
 And its fragments are sunk in the wave,
 Though I feel that my soul is deliver'd
 To pain—it shall not be its slave.
 There is many a pang to pursue me :
 They may crush but they shall not contemn ;
 They may torture, but shall not subdue me ;
 'T is of *thee* that I think—not of them.

IV.

Though human, thou didst not deceive me,
 Though woman, thou didst not forsake,
 Though loved, thou forborest to grieve me,
 Though slander'd, thou never couldst shake ;
 Though trusted, thou didst not disclaim me,
 Though parted, it was not to fly,
 Though watchful, 't was not to defame me,
 Nor, muse, that the world might belie.

V.

Yet I blame not the world, nor despise it,
 Nor the war of the many with one ;
 If my soul was not fitted to prize it,
 'T was folly not sooner to shun :
 And if dearly that error hath cost me,
 And more than I once could foresee,
 I have found that, whatever it lost me,
 It could not deprive me of *thee*.

VI.

From the wreck of the past, which hath perish'd,
 Thus much I at least may recall;
 It hath taught me that what I most cherish'd
 Deserved to be dearest of all:
 In the desert a fountain is springing,
 In the wide waste there still is a tree,
 And a bird in the solitude singing,
 Which speaks to my spirit of *thee*.

July 24, 1816.

EPISTLE TO AUGUSTA.

I.

MY sister! my sweet sister! if a name
 Dearer and purer were, it should be thine;
 Mountains and seas divide us, but I claim
 No tears, but tenderness to answer mine:
 Go where I will, to me thou art the same—
 A loved regret which I would not resign.
 There yet are two things in my destiny,—
 A world to roam through, and a home with thee.

II.

The first were nothing—had I still the last,
 It were the haven of my happiness;
 But other claims and other ties thou hast,
 And mine is not the wish to make them less.
 A strange doom is thy father's son's, and past
 Recalling, as it lies beyond redress;
 Reversed for him our grandsire's fate of yore,—
 He had no rest at sea, nor I on shore.

III.

If my inheritance of storms hath been
 In other elements, and on the rocks
 Outpenis, overlook'd or unforeseen,
 I have sustain'd my share of worldly shocks.
 The fault was mine; not do I seek to screen
 My errors with defensive paradox;
 I have been cunning in mine overthrow,
 The careful pilot of my proper woe.

IV.

Mine were my faults, and mine be their reward.
 My whole life was a contest, since the day
 That gave me being, gave me that which marr'd
 The gift,—a fate, or will, that walk'd astray ;
 And I at times have found the struggle hard,
 And thought of shaking off my bonds of clay :
 But now I fain would for a time survive,
 If but to see what next can well arrive.

V.

Kingdoms and empires in my little day
 I have outlived, and yet I am not old ;
 And when I look on this, the petty spray
 Of my own years of trouble, which have roll'd
 Like a wild-bay of breakers, melts away :
 Something—I know not what—does still uphold
 A spirit of slight patience ;—not in vain,
 Even for its own sake, do we purchase pain.

VI.

Perhaps the workings of defiance stir
 Within me—or perhaps a cold despair,
 Brought on when ills habitually recur,—
 Perhaps a kinder clime, or purer air,
 (For even to this may change of soul refer,
 And with light armour we may learn to bear,)
 Have taught me a strange quiet, which was not
 The chief companion of a calmer lot.

VII.

I feel almost at times as I have felt
 In happy childhood ; trees, and flowers, and brooks.
 Which do remember me of where I dwelt
 Ere my young mind was sacrificed to books,
 Come as of yore upon me, and can melt
 My heart with recognition of their looks ;
 And even at moments I could think I see
 Some living thing to love—but none like thee.

VIII.

Here are the Alpine landscapes which create
 A fund for contemplation—to admire
 Is a brief feeling of a trivial date ;
 But something worthier do such scenes inspire :

'Here to be lonely is not desolate,
 For much I view which I could most desire,
 And, above all, a lake I can behold
 Lovelier, not dearer, than our own of old.

IX.

Oh that thou wert but with me !—but I grow
 The fool of my own wishes, and forget
 The solitude which I have vaunted so
 Has lost its praise in this but one regret ;
 There may be others which I less may show ;—
 I am not of the plaintive mood, and yet
 I feel an ebb in my philosophy,
 And the tide rising in my alter'd eye.

X.

I did remind thee of our own dear Lake,
 By the old Hall which may be mine no more.
 Leman's is fair ; but think not I forsake
 The sweet remembrance of a dearer shore :
 Sad havoc Time must with my memory make,
 Ere *that* or *thou* can fade these eyes before ;
 Though, like all things which I have loved, they are
 Resign'd for ever, or divided far.

XI.

The world is all before me ; I but ask
 Of Nature that with which she will comply—
 It is but in her summer's sun to bask,
 To mingle with the quiet of her sky,
 To see her gentle face without a mask,
 And never gaze on it with apathy.
 She was my early friend, and now shall be
 My sister—till I look again on thee.

XII.

I can reduce all feelings but this one ;
 And that I would not ;—for at length I see
 Such scenes as those wherein my life begun.
 The earliest—even the only paths for me—
 Had I but sooner learnt the crowd to shun,
 I had been better than I now can be ;
 The passions which have torn me would have slept ;
 I had not suffer'd and *thou* hadst not wept.

XIII.

With false Ambition what had I to do?
 Little with Love, and least of all with Fame;
 And yet they came unsought, and with me grew,
 And made me all which they can make—a name.
 Yet this was not the end I did pursue;
 Surely I once beheld a nobler aim.
 But all is over—I am one the more
 To baffled millions which have gone before.

XIV.

And for the future, this world's future may
 From me demand but little of my care;
 I have outlived myself by many a day;
 Having survived so many things that were;
 My years have been no slumber, but the prey
 Of ceaseless vigils; for I had the share
 Of life which might have fill'd a century,
 Before its fourth in time had pass'd me by.

XV.

And for the remnant which may be to come
 I am content; and for the past I feel
 Not thankless,—for within the crowded sum
 Of struggles, happiness at times would steal,
 And for the present, I would not benumb
 My feelings further.—Nor shall I conceal
 That with all this I still can look around,
 And worship Nature with a thought profound.

XVI.

For thee, my own sweet sister, in thy heart
 I know myself secure, as thou in mine;
 We were and are—I am, even as thou art—
 Beings who ne'er each other can resign;
 It is the same, together or apart,
 From life's commencement to its slow decline
 We are entwined—let death come slow or fast,
 The tie which bound the first endures the last!

THE DREAM.

I.

OUR life is two-fold : Sleep hath its own world,
 A boundary between the things misnamed
 Death and existence : Sleep hath its own world,
 And a wide realm of wild reality.
 And dreams in their development have breath,
 And tears, and tortures, and the touch of joy ;
 They leave a weight upon our waking-thoughts,
 They take a weight from off our waking toils,
 They do divide our being ; they become
 A portion of ourselves as of our time,
 And look like heralds of eternity ;
 They pass like spirits of the past,—they speak
 Like Sibyls of the future ; they have power—
 The tyranny of pleasure and of pain ;
 They make us what we were not—what they will,
 And shake us with the vision that's gone by,
 The dread of vanish'd shadows—Are they so ?
 Is not the past all shadow ?—What are they ?
 Creations of the mind ?—The mind can make
 Substance, and people planets of its own
 With beings brighter than have been, and give
 A breath to forms which can outlive all flesh.
 I would recall a vision which I dream'd
 Perchance in sleep—for in itself a thought,
 A slumbering thought, is capable of years,
 And curdles a long life into one hour.

II.

I saw two beings in the hues of youth
 Standing upon a hill, a gentle hill,
 Green and of mild declivity, the last
 As 't were the cape of a long ridge of such
 Save that there was no sea to lave its base.
 But a most living landscape, and the wave
 Of woods and corn-fields, and the abodes of men
 Scatter'd at intervals, and wreathing smoke
 Arising from such rustic roofs ;—the hill
 Was crown'd with a peculiar diadem
 Of trees, in circular array, so fix'd,

Not by the sport of nature, but of man :
 These two, a maiden and a youth, were there
 Gazing—the one oh all that was beneath
 Fair as herself—but the boy gazed on her ;
 And both were young, and one was beautiful :
 And both were young—yet not alike in youth.
 As the sweet moon on the horizon's verge,
 The maid was on the eve of womanhood ;
 The boy had fewer summers, but his heart
 Had far outgrown his years, and to his eye
 There was but one beloved face on earth,
 And that was shining on him : he had look'd
 Upon it till it could not pass away ;
 He had no breath, no being, but in hers ;
 She was his voice ; he did not speak to her,
 But trembled on her words ; she was his sight,
 For his eye follow'd hers, and saw with hers,
 Which colour'd all his objects :—he had ceased
 To live within himself ; she was his life,
 The ocean to the river of his thoughts,
 Which terminated all : upon a tone,
 A touch of hers, his blood would ebb and flow,
 And his check change tempestuously—his heart
 Unknowing of its cause of agony.
 But she in these fond feelings had no share :
 Her sighs were not for him ; to her he was
 Even as a brother—but no more : 't was much,
 For brotherless she was, save in the name
 Her infant friendship had bestow'd oh him ;
 Herself the solitary scion left
 Of a time-honour'd race.—It was a name
 Which pleased him, and yet pleased him not—and why ?
 Time taught him a deep answer—when she loved
 Another ; even *now* she loved another, •
 • And on the summit of that hill she stood
 Looking afar if yet her lover's steed
 Kept pace with her expectancy, and flew.

III.

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.
 There was an ancient mansion, and before
 Its walls there was a steed caparison'd :
 Within an antique Oratory stood

The Boy of whom I spake :—he was alone,
 And pale, and pacing to and fro : anon
 He sate him down, and seized a pen, and traced
 Words which I could not guess of ; then he lean'd
 His bow'd head on his hands, and shook as 't were
 With a convulsion—then arose again,
 And with his teeth and quivering hands did tear
 What he had written, but he shed no tears,
 And he did calm himself, and fix his brow
 Into a kind of quiet : as he paused,
 The Lady of his love re-entered there ;
 She was serene and smiling then, and yet
 She knew she was by him beloved,—she knew,
 For quickly comes such knowledge, that his heart
 Was darken'd with her shadow, and she saw
 That he was wretched, but she saw not all.
 He rose, and with a cold and gentle grasp
 He took her hand ; a moment o'er his face
 A tablet of unutterable thoughts
 Was traced, and then it faded, as it came ;
 He dropp'd the hand he held, and with slow steps
 Retired, but not as bidding her adieu,
 For they did part with mutual smiles ; he pass'd
 From out the massy gate of that old Hall,
 And mounting on his steed he went his way ;
 And ne'er repass'd that hoary threshold more.

IV.

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.
 The Boy was sprung to manhood : in the wilds
 Of fiery climes he made himself a home,
 And his soul drank their sunbeams : he was girt
 With strange and dusky aspects ; he was not
 Himself like what he had been ; on the sea
 And on the shore he was a wanderer ;
 There was a mass of many images
 Crowded like waves upon me, but he was
 A part of all ; and in the last he lay
 Reposing from the noontide sultriness,
 Couch'd among fallen columns, in the shade
 Of ruin'd walls that had survived the names
 Of those who rear'd them ; by his sleeping side
 Stood camels grazing, and some goodly steeds

Were fasten'd near a fountain ; and a man
 Clad in a flowing garb did watch the while,
 While many of his tribe slumber'd around :
 And they were canopied by the blue sky,
 So cloudless, clear, and purely beautiful,
 That God alone was to be seen in heaven.

V.

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.
 The Lady of his love was wed with One
 Who did not love her better :—in her home,
 A thousand leagues from his,—her native home,
 She dwelt, begirt with growing Infancy,
 Daughters and sons of Beauty,—but behold !
 Upon her face there was the tint of grief,
 The settled shadow of an inward strife,
 And an unquiet drooping of the eye,
 As if its lid were charged with unshed tears.
 What could her grief be?—she had all she loved,
 And he who had so loved her was not there
 To trouble with bad hopes, or evil wish,
 Or ill-repress'd affliction, her pure thoughts.
 What could her grief be?—she had loved him not,
 Nor given him cause to deem himself beloved,
 Nor could he be a part of that which prey'd
 Upon her mind—a spectre of the past.

VL

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.
 The Wanderer was return'd.—I saw him stand
 Before an Altar—with a gentle bride ;
 Her face was fair, but was not that which made
 The Starlight of his Boyhood ;—as he stood
 Even at the altar, o'er his brow there came
 The self-same aspect, and the quivering shock
 That in the antique Oratory shook
 His bosom in its solitude ; and then—
 As in that hour—a moment o'er his face
 The tablet of unutterable thoughts
 Was traced,—and then it faded as it came,
 And he stood calm and quiet, and he spoke
 The fitting vows, but heard not his own words,
 And all things reel'd around him ; he could see

Not that which was, nor that which, should have been—
 But the old mansion, and the æcustom'd hall,
 And the remember'd chambers, and the place,
 The day, the hour, the sunshine, and the shade,
 All things pertaining to that place and hour,
 And her who was his destiny,—came back
 And thrust themselves between him and the light:
 What business had they there at such a time?

VII.

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.
 The Lady of his love ;—Oh ! she was changed
 As by the sickness of the soul ; her mind
 Had wander'd from its dwelling, and her eyes
 They had not their own lustre, but the look
 Which is not of the earth ; she was become
 The queen of a fantastic realm ; her thoughts
 Were combinations of disjointed things ;
 And forms impalpable and unperceived
 Of others' sight familiar were to hers.
 And this the world calls frenzy ; but the wise
 Have a far deeper madness, and the glance
 Of melancholy is a fearful gift ;
 What is it but the telescope of truth ?
 Which strips the distance of its fantasies,
 And brings life near in utter nakedness,
 Making the cold reality too real !

VIII.

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.
 The Wanderer was alone as heretofore,
 The beings which surrounded him were gone,
 Or were at war with him ; he was a mark
 For blight and desolation, compass'd round
 With Hatred and Contention ; Pain was mix'd
 In all which was served up to him, until,
 Like to the Pontic monarch of old days,
 He fed on poisons, and they had no power,
 But were a kind of nutriment ; he liv'd
 Through that which had been death to many men,
 And made him friends of mountains : with the stars
 And the quick Spirit of the Universe
 He held his dialogues ; and they did teach

To him the magic of their mysteries ;
 To him the book of Night was open'd wide,
 And voices from the deep abyss reveal'd
 A marvel and a secret.—Be it so.

IX.

My dream was past ; it had no further change.
 It was of a strange order, that the doom
 Of these two creatures should be thus traced out
 Almost like a reality—the one
 To end in madness—both in misery.

July, 1816.

LINES ON HEARING THAT LADY BYRON WAS ILL.

AND thou wert sad—yet I was not with thee ;
 And thou wert sick, and yet I was not near ;
 Methought that joy and health alone could be
 Where I was *not*—and pain and sorrow here !
 And is it thus ?—it is as I foretold,
 And shall be more so ; for the mind recoils
 Upon itself, and the wreck'd heart lies cold,
 While heaviness collects the shatter'd spoils.
 It is not in the storm nor in the strife
 We feel benumb'd, and wish to be no more,
 But in the after-silence on the shore,
 When all is lost, except a little life.

I am too well avenged !—but 't was my right ;
 • Whate'er my sins might be, *thou* wert not sent
 To be the Nemesis who should requite—•
 Nor did Heaven choose so near an instrument.
 Mercy is for the merciful !—if thou
 Hast been of such, 't will be accorded now.
 Thy nights are banish'd from the realms of sleep
 Yes ! they may flatter thee, but thou shalt feel
 A hollow agony which will not heal,
 For thou art pillow'd on a curse too deep ;
 Thou hast sown in my sorrow, and must reap
 The bitter harvest in a woe as real !

I have had many foes, but none like thee ;
 For 'gainst the rest myself I could defend,
 And be avenged, or turn them into friend ;
 But thou in safe implacability
 Hadst nought to dread—in thy own weakness shielded,
 And in my love, which hath but too much yielded,
 And spared, for thy sake, some I should not spare ;
 And thus upon the world—trust in thy truth,
 And the wild fame of my ungovern'd youth—
 On things that were not, and on things that are—
 Even upon such a basis hast thou built—
 A monument, whose cement hath been guilt !
 The moral Clytemnestra of thy lord,
 And hew'd down, with an unsuspected sword,
 Fame, peace, and hope—and all the better life,
 Which, but for this cold treason of thy heart,
 Might still have risen from out the grave of strife,
 And found a nobler duty than to part.
 But of thy virtues didst thou make a vice,
 Trafficking with them in a purpose cold,
 For present anger, and for future gold—
 And buying other's grief at any price.
 And thus once enter'd into crooked ways,
 The early truth, which was thy proper praise,
 Did not still walk beside thee—but at times,
 And with a breast unknowing its own crimes,
 Deceit, averments incompatible,
 Equivocations, and the thoughts which dwell
 In Janus-spirits—the significant eye
 Which learns to lie with silence—the pretext
 Of prudence, with advantages annex'd—
 The acquiescence in all things which tend,
 No matter how, to the desired end—
 All found a place in thy philosophy.
 The means were worthy, and the end is won—
 I would not do by thee as thou hast done !

September, 1816.

Notes.

PARISINA.

Page 1.

"PARISINA."] This turned out a calamitous year for the people of Ferrara, for there occurred a very tragical event in the court of their sovereign. Our annals, both printed and in manuscript, with the exception of the unpolished and negligent work of Sarpi, and one other, have given the following relation of it—from which, however, are rejected many details, and especially the narrative of Bandelli, who wrote a century afterwards, and who does not accord with the contemporary historians.

By the above-mentioned Stella dell' Assassino, the Marquis, in the year 1405, had a son called Ugo, a beautiful and ingenuous youth. Parisina Maletesta, second wife of Niccolo, like the generality of step-mothers, treated him with little kindness, to the infinite regret of the Marquis, who regarded him with fond partiality. One day she asked leave of her husband to undertake a certain journey, to which he consented, but upon condition that Ugo should bear her company; for he hoped by these means to induce her, in the end, to lay aside the obstinate aversion which she had conceived against him. And indeed his intent was accomplished but too well, since, during the journey, she not only divested herself of all her hatred, but fell into the opposite extreme. After their return, the Marquis had no longer any occasion to renew his former reproofs. It happened one day that a servant of the Marquis, named Zoese, or, as some call him, Giorgio, passing before the apartments of Parisina, saw going out from one of them one of

her chambermaids, all terrified and in tears. Asking the reason, she told him that her mistress, for some slight offence, had been beating her; and giving vent to her rage, she added, that she could easily be revenged, if she chose to make known the criminal familiarity which subsisted between Parisina and her step-son. The servant took note of the words, and related them to his master. He was astounded thereat, but, scarcely believing his ears, he assured himself of the fact, alas! too clearly, on the 18th of May, by looking through a hole made in the ceiling of his wife's chamber. Instantly he broke into a furious rage, and arrested both of them, together with Aldobrandino Rangoni, of Modena, her gentleman, and also, as some say, two of the women of her chamber, as abettors of this sinful act. He ordered them to be brought to a hasty trial, desiring the judges to pronounce sentence, in the accustomed forms, upon the culprits. This sentence was death. Some there were that bestirred themselves in favour of the delinquents, and amongst others, Ugoccion Contrario, who was all-powerful with Niccolo, and also his aged and much-deserving minister Alberto dal Sale. Both of these, their tears flowing down their cheeks, and upon their knees, implored him for mercy; adducing whatever reasons they could suggest for sparing the offenders, besides those motives of honour and decency which might persuade him to conceal from the public so scandalous a deed. But his rage made him inflexible, and, on the instant, he commanded that sentence should be put in execution.

"It was, then, in the prisons of the castle, and exactly in those frightful dungeons which are seen at this day beneath the chamber called the Aurora, at the foot of the Lion's tower, at the top of the street Giovecca, that on the night of the 21st of May were beheaded, first Ugo, and afterwards Parisina. Zoese, he that accused her, conducted the latter under his arm to the place of punishment. She, all along, fancied that she was to be thrown into a pit, and asked at every step, whether she was yet come to the spot? She was told that her punishment was the axe. She inquired what was become of Ugo, and received for answer, that he was already dead; at the which, sighing grievously, she exclaimed, 'Now, then, I wish not myself to live;' and, being come to the block, she stripped herself with her own hands of all her ornaments, and, wrapping a cloth round her head, submitted to the fatal stroke, which terminated the cruel scene. The same was done with

Rangoni, who, together with the others, according to two calendars in the library of St. Francesco, was buried in the cemetery of that convent. Nothing else is known respecting the women.

"The Marquis kept watch the whole of that dreadful night, and, as he was walking backwards and forwards, inquired of the captain of the castle if Ugo was dead yet? who answered him, Yes. He then gave himself up to the most desperate lamentations, exclaiming, 'Oh, that I too were dead, since I have been hurried on to resolve thus against my own Ugo!' And then gnawing with his teeth a cane which he had in his hand, he passed the rest of the night in sighs and in tears, calling frequently upon his own dear Ugo. On the following day, calling to mind that it would be necessary to make public his justification, seeing that the transaction could not be kept secret, he ordered the narrative to be drawn out upon paper, and sent it to all the courts of Italy.

"On receiving this advice, the Doge of Venice, Francesco Foscari, gave orders, but without publishing his reasons, that stop should be put to the preparations for a tournament, which, under the auspices of the Marquis, and at the expense of the city of Padua, was about to take place, in the square of St. Mark, in order to celebrate his advancement to the ducal chair.

"The Marquis, in addition to what he had already done, from some unaccountable burst of vengeance, commanded that as many of the married women as were well known to him to be faithless, like his Parisina, should, like her, be beheaded. Amongst others, Barberina, or, as some call her, Laodamia Romei, wife of the court judge, underwent this sentence at the usual place of execution; that is to say, in the quarter of St. Giacomo, opposite the present fortress, beyond St. Paul's. It cannot be told how strange appeared this proceeding in a prince, who, considering his own disposition, should, as it seemed, have been in such cases most indulgent. Some, however, there were who did not fail to commend him."

Page 2.

"As twilight melts beneath the moon away.]" The lines contained in this section were printed as set to music some time since, but belonged to the poem where they now appear; the greater part of which was composed prior to "*Lara*."

* FRIZZI—"History of Ferrara."

Page 9.

"That should have won as haught a crest."] Haught—haughty—"Away, *haught* man, thou art insulting me."—SHAKESPEARE.

THE PRISONER OF CHILLON.

Page 19.

"In a single night."] Ludovico Sforza, and others.—The same is asserted of Marie Antoinette's, the wife of Louis the Sixteenth, though not in quite so short a period. Grief is said to have the same effect: to such, and not to fear, this charge in *hers* was to be attributed.

Page 22.

"From Chillon's snow-white battlement."] The Château de Chillon is situated between Clarens and Villeneuve, which last is at one extremity of the Lake of Geneva. On its left are the entrances of the Rhone, and opposite are the heights of Meillerie and the range of Alps above Boveret and St. Gingo. Near it, on a hill behind, is a torrent: below it, washing its walls, the lake has been fathomed to the depth of 800 feet French measure: within it are a range of dungeons, in which the early reformers, and subsequently prisoners of state, were confined. Across one of the vaults is a beam black with age, on which we were informed that the condemned were formerly executed. In the cells are seven pillars, or, rather, eight, one being half merged in the wall; in some of these are rings for the fetters and the fettered: in the pavement the steps of Bonnivard have left their traces. He was confined here several years. It is by this castle that Rousseau has fixed the catastrophe of his Héloïse, in the rescue of one of her children by Julie from the water; the shock of which, and the illness produced by the immersion, is the cause of her death. The château is large, and seen along the lake for a great distance. The walls are white.

Page 28.

"And then there was a little isle."] Between the entrances of the Rhone and Villeneuve, not far from Chillon, is a very small island; the only one I could perceive, in my voyage

round and over the lake, within its circumference. It contains a few trees (I think not above three), and from its singleness and diminutive size has a peculiar effect upon the view.

MAZEPPA.

Page 34.

"Rich as a salt or silver mine."] This comparison of a "salt mine" may, perhaps, be permitted to a Pole, as the wealth of the country consists greatly in the salt mines.

THE ISLAND.

Page 58.

"And bread itself is gathered as a fruit."] The now celebrated bread-fruit, to transplant which Captain Bligh's expedition was undertaken.

Page 59.

"How pleasant were the songs of Toobonai."] The first three sections are taken from an actual song of the Tonga Islanders, of which a prose translation is given in "Mariner's Account of the Tonga Islands." Toobonai is *not* however one of them; but was one of those where Christian and the mutineers took refuge. I have altered and added, but have retained as much as possible of the original.

Page 63.

- "As Ishmael, wafted on his desert-ship."] The "ship of the desert" is the Oriental figure for the camel or dromedary; and they deserve the metaphor well,—the former for his endurance, the latter for his swiftness.

Page 63.

"Beyond itself, and must retrace its way."]

"Lucullus, when frugality could charm,
Had roasted turnips in the Sabine farm."—POPE.

Page 63.

"Had form'd his glorious namesake's counterpart."] The consul Nero, who made the unequalled march which deceived Hannibal, and defeated Asdrubal; thereby accomplishing an achievement almost unrivalled in military annals. The first intelligence of his return, to Hannibal, was the sight of Asdrubal's head thrown into his camp. When Hannibal saw this, he exclaimed with a sigh, that "Rome would now be the mistress of the world." And yet to this victory of Nero's it might be owing that his imperial namesake reigned at all. But the infamy of the one has eclipsed the glory of the other. When the name of "Nero" is heard, who thinks of the consul? —But such are human things!

Page 66.

"And Loch-na-gar with Ida look'd o'er Troy."] When very young, about eight years of age, after an attack of the scarlet fever at Aberdeen, I was removed by medical advice into the Highlands. Here I passed occasionally some summers, and from this period I date my love of mountainous countries. I can never forget the effect, a few years afterwards, in England, of the only thing I had long seen, even in miniature, of a mountain, in the Malvern Hills. After I returned to Cheltenham, I used to watch them every afternoon, at sunset, with a sensation which I cannot describe. This was boyish enough; but I was then only thirteen years of age, and it was in the holidays.

Page 68.

"Sung sweetly to the rose the day's farewell."] The now well-known story of the loves of the nightingale and rose need not be more than alluded to, being sufficiently familiar to the Western as to the Eastern reader.

Page 69.

"Than breathes his mimic murmur in the shell."] "If the reader will apply to his ear the sea-shell on his chimney-piece, he will be aware of what is alluded to. If the text should appear obscure, he will find in "Gebir" the same idea better expressed in two lines. The poem I never read, but have seen the lines quoted by a more recondite reader—who seems to be of a different opinion from the editor of the Quarterly Review, who qualified it, in his answer to the Critical Reviewer

of his Juvenal, as trash of the worst and most insane description. It is to Mr. Landor, the author of "Gebir," so qualified, and of some Latin poems, which vie with Martial or Catullus in obscenity, that the immaculate Mr. Southey addresses his declamation against impurity!

Page 70.

"But deem him sailor or philosopher."] Hobbes, the father of Locke's and other philosophy, was an inveterate smoker,—even to pipes beyond computation.

Page 70.

"Flock o'er the deck, in Neptune's borrow'd car."] This rough but jovial ceremony, used in crossing the line, has been so often and so well described, that it need not be more than alluded to.

Page 72.

"'Right,' quoth Ben; 'that will do for the marines.'" "That will do for the marines, but the sailors won't believe it," is an old saying; and one of the few fragments of former jealousies which still survive (in jest only) between these gallant services.

Page 73.

"No less of human bravery than the brave!"] Archidamus, king of Sparta, and son of Agesilaus, when he saw a machine invented for the casting of stones and darts, exclaimed that it was the "grave of valour." The same story has been told of some knights on the first application of gunpowder; but the original anecdote is in Plutarch.

Page 82.

"Whose only portal was the Keyless wave."] Of this cave (which is no fiction) the original will be found in the ninth chapter of, "Mariner's Account of the Tonga Islands." I have taken the poetical liberty to transplant it to Toobonai, the last island where any distinct account is left of Christian and his comrades.

Page 83.

"The fretted pinnacle, the aisle, the nave."] This may seem too minute for the general outline (in Mariner's Account) from which it is taken. But few men have travelled without seeing something of the kind—on land, that is. Without adverting to

Ellora, in Mungo Park's last journal, he mentions having met with a rock or mountain so exactly resembling a Gothic cathedral, that only minute inspection could convince him that it was a work of nature.

Page 84.

"With each new being born or to be born."] The reader will recollect the epigram of the Greek anthology, or its translation into most of the modern languages :—

"Whoe'er thou art, thy master see—
He was, or is, or is to be."

Page 84.

"The kindling ashes to his kindled breast."] The tradition is attached to the story of Eloisa, that when her body was lowered into the grave of Abelard (who had been buried twenty years), he opened his arms to receive her.

Page 87.

"He tore the topmost button from his vest."] In Thibault's account of Frederic the Second of Prussia, there is a singular relation of a young Frenchman, who with his mistress appeared to be of some rank. He enlisted and deserted at Schweidnitz ; and after a desperate resistance was retaken, having killed an officer, who attempted to seize him after he was wounded, by the discharge of his musket loaded with a *button* of his uniform. Some circumstances on his court-martial raised a great interest amongst his judges, who wished to discover his real situation in life, which he offered to disclose, but to the *king* only, to whom he requested permission to write. This was refused, and Frederic was filled with the greatest indignation, from baffled curiosity or some other motive, when he understood that his request had been denied.

MANFRED.

Page 103.

"It is not noon—the sunbow's rays still arch."] This iris is formed by the rays of the sun over the lower part of the Alpine torrents : it is exactly like a rainbow come down to pay a visit, and so close that you may walk into it : this effect lasts till noon.

Page 106.

"Eros and Anteros, at Gadara." The philosopher Jamblicus. The story of the raising of Eros and Anteros may be found in his *Life* by Eunapius. It is well told.

Page 108.

"In words of dubious import, but fulfill'd." The story of Pausanias, king of Sparta (who commanded the Greeks at the battle of Plataea, and afterwards perished for an attempt to betray the Lacedæmonians), and Cleonice, is told in Plutarch's *Life of Cimon*; and in the *Laconics* of Pausanias the sophist, in his description of Greece.

Page 121.

"Of undiseased mankind, the giant sons." "And it came to pass, that the *Sons of God* saw the daughters of men, that they were fair," &c.—"There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the *Sons of God* came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown."—*Genesis*, ch. vi. verses 2 and 4.

MARINO FALIERO, DOGE OF VENICE.

APPENDIX.

NOTE A.

I am obliged for the following excellent translation of the old Chronicle to Mr. F. Cohen, to whom the reader will find himself indebted for a version that I could not myself—though after many years' intercourse with Italian—have given by any means so purely and so faithfully.

STORY OF MARINO FALIERO, DOGE XLIX.
MCCCLIV.

On the eleventh day of September, in the year of our Lord 1354, Marino Faliero was elected and chosen to be the Duke of the Commonwealth of Venice. He was Count of Valdemarino, in the Marches of Treviso, and a Knight, and a wealthy man to boot. As soon as the election was completed,

it was resolved in the Great Council, that a deputation of twelve should be despatched to Marino Faliero the Duke, who was then on his way from Rome; for when he was chosen, he was ambassador at the court of the Holy Father, at Rome,—the Holy Father himself held his court at Avignon. When Messer Marino Faliero the Duke was about to land in this city, on the 5th day of October, 1354, a thick haze came on and darkened the air: and he was enforced to land on the place of St. Mark, between the two columns, on the spot where evil-doers are put to death; and all thought that this was the worst of tokens.—Nor must I forget to write that which I have read in a chronicle. When Messer Marino Faliero was Podesta and Captain of Treviso, the bishop delayed coming in with the holy sacrament, on a day when a procession was to take place. Now, the said Marino Faliero was so very proud and wrathful, that he buffeted the Bishop, and almost struck him to the ground: and, therefore, Heaven allowed Marino Faliero to go out of his right senses, in order that he might bring himself to an evil death.

When this Duke had held the dukedom during nine months and six days, he, being wicked and ambitious, sought to make himself Lord of Venice, in the manner which I have read in an ancient chronicle. When the Thursday arrived upon which they were wont to hunt the bull, the bull hunt took place as usual; and, according to the usage of those times, after the bull hunt had ended, they all proceeded unto the palace of the Duke, and assembled together in one of his halls; and they disported themselves with the women. And until the first bell tolled they danced, and then a banquet was served up. My Lord the Duke paid the expenses thereof, provided he had a Duchess, and after the banquet they all returned to their homes.

Now to this feast there came a certain Ser Michele Steno, a gentleman of poor estate and very young, but crafty and daring, and who loved one of the damsels of the Duchess. Ser Michele stood amongst the women upon the solajo; and he behaved indiscreetly, so that my Lord the Duke ordered that he should be kicked off the solajo; and the esquires of the Duke flung him down from the solajo accordingly. Ser Michele thought that such an affront was beyond all bearing; and when the feast was over, and all other persons had left the palace, he, continuing heated with anger, went to the hall of audience, and wrote certain unseemly words relating to the Duke and the

Duchess upon the chair in which the Duke was used to sit; for in those days the Duke did not cover his chair with cloth of sendal, but he sat in a chair of wood. Ser Michele wrote thereon—“*Marin Falier, the husband of the fair wife; others kiss her, but he keeps her.*” In the morning the words were seen, and the matter was considered to be very scandalous; and the Senate commanded the Avogadori of the Commonwealth to proceed therein with the greatest diligence. A largess of great amount was immediately proffered by the Avogadori, in order to discover who had written these words. And at length it was known that Michele Steno had written them. It was resolved in the Council of Forty that he should be arrested; and he then confessed that in the fit of vexation and spite, occasioned by his being thrust off the solajo in the presence of his mistress, he had written the words. Therefore the Council debated thereon. And the Council took his youth into consideration, and that he was a lover; and therefore they adjudged that he should be kept in close confinement during two months, and that afterwards he should be banished from Venice and the state during one year. In consequence of this merciful sentence the Duke became exceedingly wroth, it appearing to him that the Council had not acted in such a manner as was required by the respect due to his ducal dignity; and he said that they ought to have condemned Ser Michele to be hanged by the neck, or at least to be banished for life.

Now it was fated that my Lord Duke Marino was to have his head cut off. And as it is necessary when any effect is to be brought about, that the cause of such effect must happen, it therefore came to pass, that on the very day after sentence had been pronounced on Ser Michele Steno, being the first day of Lent, a gentleman of the house of Barbaro, a choleric gentleman, went to the arsenal, and required certain things of the masters of the galleys. This he did in the presence of the Admiral of the arsenal, and he, hearing the request, answered, —No, it cannot be done. High words arose between the gentleman and the Admiral, and the gentleman struck him with his fist just above the eye; and as he happened to have a ring on his finger, the ring cut the Admiral and drew blood. The Admiral, all bruised and bloody, ran straight to the Duke to complain, and with the intent of praying him to inflict some heavy punishment upon the gentleman of Cà Barbaro.—“What wouldst thou have me do for thee?” answered the Duke:—“think upon the shameful gibe which hath been written con-

cerning me; and think 'on the manner in which they have punished that ribald Michele Steno, who wrote it; and see how the Council of Forty respect our person."—Upon this the Admiral answered,—“My Lord Duke, if you would wish to make yourself a prince, and to cut all those cuckoldy gentlemen to pieces, I have the heart, if you do but help me, to make you prince of all this state; and then you may punish them all.” Hearing this, the Duke said,—“How can such a matter be brought about?”—and so they discoursed thereon.

The Duke called for his nephew, Ser Bertuccio Faliero, who lived with him in the palace, and they communed about this plot. And without leaving the place, they sent for Philip Calendaro, a seaman of great repute, and for Bertuccio Israello, who was exceedingly wily and cunning. Then taking counsel amongst themselves, they agreed to call in some others; and so, for several nights successively, they met with the Duke at home in his palace. And the following men were called in singly; to wit:—Niccolo Fagiuolo, Giovanni da Corfu, Stefano Fagiono, Niccolo dalle Bende, Niccolo Biondo, and Stefano Trivisano.—It was concerted that sixteen or seventeen leaders should be stationed in various parts of the city, each being at the head of forty men, armed and prepared; but the followers were not to know their destination. On the appointed day they were to make affrays amongst themselves here and there, in order that the Duke might have a pretence for tolling the bells of San Marco; these bells are never rung but by the order of the Duke. And at the sound of the bells, these sixteen or seventeen, with their followers, were to come to San Marco, through the streets which open upon the Piazza. And when the noble and leading citizens should come into the Piazza, to know the cause of the riot, then the conspirators were to cut them in pieces; and this work being finished, my Lord Marino Faliero the Duke was to be proclaimed the Lord of Venice. Things having been thus settled, they agreed to fulfil their intent on Wednesday, the 15th day of April, in the year 1355. So covertly did they plot, that no one ever dreamt of their machinations.

But the Lord, who hath always helped this most glorious city, and who, loving its righteousness and holiness, hath never forsaken it, inspired one Beltramo Bergamasco to be the cause of bringing the plot to light, in the following manner. This Beltramo, who belonged to Ser Niccolo Lioni of Santo Stefano, had heard a word or two of what was to take place; and so,

in the above-mentioned month of April, he went to the house of the aforesaid Ser Niccolo Lioni, and told him all the particulars of the plot. Ser Niccolo, when he heard all these things, was struck dead, as it were, with affright. He heard all the particulars; and Beltramo prayed him to keep it secret; and if he told Ser Niccolo, it was in order that Ser Niccolo might stop at home on the 15th of April, and thus save his life. Beltramo was going, but Ser Niccolo ordered his servants to lay hands upon him, and lock him up. Ser Niccolo then went to the house of Messer Giovanni Gradenigo Nasoni, who afterwards became Duke and who also lived at Santo Stefano, and told him all. The matter seemed to him to be of the very greatest importance, as indeed it was; and they two went to the house of Ser Marco Cornaro, who lived at San Felice; and, having spoken with him, they all three then determined to go back to the house of Ser Niccolo Lioni, to examine the said Beltramo; and having questioned him, and heard all that he had to say, they left him in confinement. And then they all three went into the sacristy of San Salvatore, and sent their men to summon the Councillors, the Avogadori, the Capi de' Diéci, and those of the Great Council.

When all were assembled, the whole story was told to them. They were struck dead, as it were, with affright. They determined to send for Beltramo. He was brought in before them. They examined him, and ascertained that the matter was true; and, although they were exceedingly troubled, yet they determined upon their measures. And they sent for the Capi de' Quarante, the Signori di Notte, the Capi de' Sestieri, and the Cinque della Pace; and they were ordered to associate to their men other good men and true, who were to proceed to the houses of theingleaders of the conspiracy, and secure them. And they secured the foreman of the arsenal, in order that the conspirators might not do mischief. Towards nightfall they assembled in the palace. When they were assembled in the palace, they caused the gates of the quadrangle of the palace to be shut. And they sent to the keeper of the Bell-tower, and forbade the tolling of the bells. All this was carried into effect. The before-mentioned conspirators were secured, and they were brought to the palace; and, as the Council of Ten saw that the Duke was in the plot, they resolved that twenty of the leading men of the state should be associated to them, for the purpose of consultation and deliberation, but that they should not be allowed to ballot,

The counsellors were the following :—Ser Giovanni Mocenigo, of the Sestiero of San Marco ; Ser Almoro Veniero da Santa Marina, of the Sestiero of Castello ; Ser Tomaso Viadro, of the Sestiero of Canaregio ; Ser Giovanni Sanudo, of the Sestiero of Santa Croce ; Ser Pietro Trivisano, of the Sestiero of San Paolo ; Ser Pantalione Barbo il Grando, of the Sestiero of Ossoduro. The Avogadori of the Commonwealth were Zufredo Morosini, and Ser Orio Pasqualigo ; and these did not ballot. Those of the Council of Ten were Ser Giovanni Marcello, Ser Tomaso Sanudo, and Ser Micheletto Dolfin, the heads of the aforesaid Council of Ten. Ser Luca da Legge, and Ser Pietro da Mosto, inquisitors of the aforesaid Council. And Ser Marco Polani, Ser Marino Veniero, Ser Lando Lombardo, and Ser Nicoletto Trivisano, of Sant' Angelo.

Late in the night, just before the dawning, they chose a junta of twenty noblemen of Venice from among the wisest, and the worthiest, and the oldest. They were to give counsel, but not to ballot. And they would not admit any one of Cà Faliero. And Niccolo Faliero, and another Niccolo Faliero, of San Tomaso, were expelled from the Council, because they belonged to the family of the Doge. And this resolution of creating the junta of twenty was much praised throughout the state. The following were the members of the junta of twenty :—Ser Marco Gustiniani, Procuratore, Ser Andrea Erizzo, Procuratore, Ser Lionardo Giustiniani, Procuratore, Ser Andrea Contarini, Ser Simone Dandolo, Ser Niccolo Volpe, Ser Giovanni Lore-dano, Ser Marco Diedo, Ser Giovanni Gradenigo, Ser Andrea Cornaro, Cavaliere, Ser Marco Soranzo, Ser Rinieri du Mo-ro, Ser Gazano Marcello, Ser Marino Morosini, Ser Stefano Belegno, Ser Niccolo Lioni, Ser Filippo Orio, Ser Marco Trivisano, Ser Jacopo Bragadino, Ser Giovanni Foscari.

These twenty were accordingly called in to the Council of Ten ; and they sent for my Lord Marino Faliero, the Duke ; and my Lord Marino was then consorting in the palace with people of great estate, gentlemen and other good men, none of whom knew yet how the fact stood.

At the same time Bertucci Israello, who, as one of the ring-leaders, was to head the conspirators in Santa Croce, was arrested and bound, and brought before the Council. Zanello del Brin, Nicoletto di Rosa, Nicoletto Alberto, and the Guardiana, were also taken, together with several seamen, and people of various ranks. These were examined, and the truth of the plot was ascertained.

On the 16th of April judgment was given in the Council of Ten, that Filippo Calendaro and Bertuccio Israello should be hanged upon the red pillars of the balcony of the palace, from which the Duke is wont to look at the bull hunt: and they were hanged with gags in their mouths.

The next day the following were condemned:—Niccolo Zuccuolo, Nicoletto Blondo, Nicoletto Doro, Marco Giuda, Jacomello Dagolino, Nicoletto Fidele, the son of Filippo Calendaro, Marco Torello, called Israello, Stefano Trivisano, the money-changer of Santa Margherita, and Antonio dalle Bende. These were all taken at Chiozza, for they were endeavouring to escape. Afterwards, by virtue of the sentence which was passed upon them in the Council of Ten, they were hanged on successive days; some singly and some in couples, upon the columns of the palace, beginning from the red columns, and so going onwards towards the canal. And other prisoners were discharged, because, although they had been involved in the conspiracy, yet they had not assisted in it: for they were given to understand by some of the heads of the plot, that they were to come armed and prepared for the service of the state, and in order to secure certain criminals; and they knew nothing else. Nicoletto Alberto, the Guardiaga, and Bartolommeo Ciricolo and his son, and several others, who were not guilty, were discharged.

On Friday, the 16th day of April, judgment was also given in the aforesaid Council of Ten, that my Lord Marino Faliero, the Duke, should have his head cut off; and that the execution should be done on the landing-place of the stone staircase, where the Dukes take their oath when they first enter the palace. On the following day, the 17th of April, the doors of the palace being shut, the Duke had his head cut off, about the hour of noon. And the cap of estate was taken from the Duke's head before he came down-stairs. When the execution was over, it is said that one of the Council of Ten went to the columns of the palace, over against the place of St. Mark, and that he showed the bloody sword unto the people, crying out with a loud voice—"The terrible doom hath fallen upon the traitor!"—and the doors were opened, and the people all rushed in, to see the corpse of the Duke, who had been beheaded.

It must be known that Ser Giovanni Sanudo, the councillor, was not present when the aforesaid sentence was pronounced; because he was unwell and remained at home. So that only

fourteen balloted; that is to say, five councillors, and nine of the Council of Ten. And it was adjudged, that all the lands and chattels of the Duke, as well as of the other traitors, should be forfeited to the state. And as a grace to the Duke, it was resolved in the Council of Ten, that he should be allowed to dispose of two thousand ducats out of his own property. And it was resolved, that all the councillors, and all the Avogadori of the Commonwealth, those of the Council of Ten, and the members of the junta, who had assisted in passing sentence on the Duke and the other traitors, should have the privilege of carrying arms both by day and by night in Venice, and from Grado to Cavazere. And they were also to be allowed two footmen carrying arms, the aforesaid footmen living and boarding with them in their own houses. And he who did not keep two footmen might transfer the privilege to his sons or his brothers; but only to two. Permission of carrying arms was also granted to the four Notaries of the Chancery, that is to say, of the Supreme Court, who took the depositions; and they were, Amedio, Nicoletto di Lorino, Steffanello, and Pietro de Compostelli the secretaries of the Signori di Notte.

After the traitors had been hanged, and the Duke had had his head cut off, the state remained in great tranquillity and peace. And, as I have read in a Chronicle, the corpse of the Duke was removed in a barge, with eight torches, to his tomb in the church of San Giovanni e Paolo, where it was buried. The tomb is now in that aisle in the middle of the little church of Santa Maria della Pace which was built by Bishop Gabriel of Bergamo. It is a coffin of stone, with these words engraven thereon: "*Hic jacet Dominus Marinus Falestro Dux.*"—And they did not paint his portrait in the hall of the Great Council:—but in the place where it ought to have been, you see these words: "*Hic est locus Marini Falestro, decapitati pro criminibus.*"—And it is thought that his house was granted to the church of Sant' Apostolo; it was that great one near the bridge. Yet this could not be the case, or else the family bought it back from the church; for it still belongs to Cà Faliero. I must not refrain from noting, that some wished to write the following words in the place where his portrait ought to have been, as aforesaid:—"Marinus Falestro Dux, temeritas me cepit. Pœnas lui, decapitatus pro criminibus."—Others, also, indited a couplet worthy of being inscribed upon his tomb.

"*Dux Venetum jacet heic, patrium qui prodere tentans,
 Scilicet, decus, censum perdidit, atque caput.*"

NOTE B.

PETRARCH ON THE CONSPIRACY OF MARINO FALIERO.

“Al giovane Doge Andrea Dandolo succedette un vecchio, il quale tardi si pose al timone della repubblica, ma sempre prima di quel che facea d'uopo a lui, ed alla patria. egli è Marino Faliero, personaggio a me noto per antica dimestichezza. Falsa erà l'opinione intorno a lui, giacchè egli si mostrò fornito più di coraggio, che di senno. Non pago della prima dignità, entro con sinistro piede nel pubblico Palazzo: imperciocchè questo Doge dei Veneti, magistrato sacro in tutti i secoli, che dagli antichi fù sempre venerato qual nume in quella città, l'altr' jeri fù decollato nel vestibolo dell' istesso Palazzo. Discorrerei fin dal principio le cause di un tale evento, e così vario, ed ambiguo non ne fosse il grido. Nessuno però lo scusa, tutti affermano, che egli abbia voluto cangiar qualche cosa nell'ordine della repubblica a lui tramandato dai maggiori. Che desiderava egli di più? Io son d'avviso, che egli abbia ottenuto ciò, che non si concedette a nessun altro: mentre adempiva gli ufficj di legato presso il Pontefice, e sulle rive del Rodano trattava la pace, che io prima di lui avevo indarno tentato di conchiudere, gli fù conferito l'onore del Ducato, che ne chiedeva, ne s'aspettava. Tornato in patria, pensò a quello, cui nessuno non pose mente giammai, e soffrì quello, che a niuno accadde mai di soffrire: giacchè in quel luogo celeberrimo, e chiarissimo, e bellissimo infra tutti quelli, che io vidi, ove i suoi antenati avevano ricevuti grandissimi onori in mezzo alle pompe trionfali, ivi egli fù trascinato in modo servile, e spogliato delle insegne ducali, perdette la testa, e macchiò col proprio sangue le soglie del tempio, l'atrio del Palazzo, e le scale marmoree, rendute spesse volte illustri o dalle solenni festività o dalle ostili spoglie. Hò notato il luogo, ora noto il tempo: è l'anno del Natale di Cristo, 1355, fù il giorno 18 d'Aprile. Si alto è il grido sparso, che se alcuno esaminerà la disciplina, e le costumanze di quella città, e quanto mutamento di cose venga minacciato dalla morte di un sol uomo (quantunque molti altri, come narrano, essendo complici, o subirono l'istesso supplicio, o lo aspettano) si accorgerà, che nulla di più grande avvenne ai nostri tempi nella Italia. Tu forse qui attendi il mio giudizio: assolvo il popolo, se credere alla fama, benchè abbia potuto e castigare più mitemente, e con maggior dolcezza

vendicare il suo dolore: ma non così facilmente, si modera, un'ira giusta insieme, e grande in un numeroso popolo principalmente, nel quale il precipitoso, ed instabile volgo aguzza gli stimoli dell'irracondia con rapidi, e sconsigliati clamori. Compatisco, e nell'istesso tempo mi adiro con quell'infelice uomo, il quale adorno di un' insolito onore, non so, che cosa si volesse negli estremi anni della sua vita: la calamità di lui diviene sempre più grave, perchè dalla sentenza contra di esso promulgata aperirà, che egli fù non solo misero, ma insano, e demente, e che con vane arti si usurpò per tanti anni una falsa fama di sapienza. Ammonisco i Dogi, i quali gli succederano, che questo è un' esempio posto innanzi ai loro occhj, quale specchio, nel quale veggano d'essere non Signori, ma Duci, anzi nemmeno Duci, ma onorati servi della Repubblica. Tu sta sano; e giacchè fluttuano le pubbliche cose, sforsiamosi di governar modestissimamente i privati nostri affari."—LEVATI, *Viaggi di Petrarca*, vol. iv. p. 323.

The above Italian translation from the Latin epistles of Petrarch proves—1stly, that Marino Faliero was a personal friend of Petrarch's; "antica dimestichezza," old intimacy, is the phrase of the poet. 2ndly, That Petrarch thought that he had more courage than conduct, "più di *corraggio* che di senno." 3rdly, That there was some jealousy on the part of Petrarch; for he says that Marino Faliero was treating of the peace which he himself had "vainly attempted to conclude." 4thly, That the honour of the Dukedom was conferred upon him, which he neither sought nor expected, "che nè chiedeva nè aspettava," and which had never been granted to any other in like circumstances, "ciò che non si concedette a nessun altro," a proof of the high esteem in which he must have been held. 5thly, That he had a reputation for *wisdom*, only forfeited by the last enterprise of his life, "si usurpò per tanti anni una falsa fama di sapienza"—"He had usurped for so many years a false fame of wisdom"—rather a difficult task, I should think. People are generally found out before eighty years of age, at least in a republic.—From these, and the other historical notes which I have collected, it may be inferred, that Marino Faliero possessed many of the qualities, but not the success, of a hero; and that his passions were too violent. The paltry and ignorant account of Dr. Moore falls to the ground. Petrarch says, "that there had been no greater event in his times" (*our times* literally), "nostri tempi," in Italy. He also differs from the historian in saying that Faliero was "on the banks of the *Rhone*," instead

of at Rome, when elected: the other accounts say, that the députation of the Venetian senate met him at Ravenna. How this may have been, it is not for me to decide, and is of no great importance. Had the man succeeded, he would have changed the face of Venice, and perhaps of Italy. As it is, what *are* they both?

NOTE C.

VENETIAN SOCIETY AND MANNERS.

“Vice without splendour, sin without relief
Even from the gloss of love to smooth it o’er;
But, in its stead, coarse lusts of habitude,” &c.

[See p. 226.]

“To these attacks so frequently pointed by the government against the clergy,—to the continual struggles between the different constituted bodies,—to these enterprises carried on by the mass of the nobles against the depositaries of power,—to all these projects of innovation, which always ended by a stroke of state policy, we must add a cause not less fitted to spread contempt for ancient doctrines; *this was the excess of corruption.*

“That freedom of manners, which had been long boasted of as the principal charm of Venetian society, had degenerated into scandalous licentiousness: the tie of marriage was less sacred in that Catholic country, than among those nations where the laws and religion admit of its being dissolved. Because they could not break the contract, they feigned that it had not existed; and the ground of nullity, immodestly alleged by the married pair, was admitted with equal facility by priests and magistrates, alike corrupt. These divorces, veiled under another name, became so frequent that the most important act of civil society was discovered to be amenable to a tribunal of exceptions; and to restrain the open scandal of such proceedings became the office of the police. In 1782 the Council of Ten decreed, that every woman who should sue for a dissolution of her marriage should be compelled to await the decision of the judges in some convent, to be named by the court.* Soon afterwards the same council summoned all causes of that nature before itself.† This infringement on ecclesiastical

* Correspondence of M. Schlink, French chargé d’affaires. Despatch of 24th August, 1782.

† *Ibid.* Despatch 31st August.

jurisdiction having occasioned some remonstrance from Rome, the council retained only the right of rejecting the petition of the married persons, and consented to refer such causes to the holy office as it should not previously have rejected.*

"There was a moment in which, doubtless, the destruction of private fortunes, the ruin of youth, the domestic discord occasioned by these abuses, determined the government to depart from its established maxims concerning the freedom of manners allowed the subject. All the courtesans were banished from Venice; but their absence was not enough to reclaim and bring back good morals to a whole people brought up in the most scandalous licentiousness. Depravity reached the very bosom of private families, and even into the cloister; and they found themselves obliged to recall, and even to indemnify,† women who sometimes gained possession of important secrets, and who might be usefully employed in the ruin of men whose fortunes might have rendered them dangerous. Since that time licentiousness has gone on increasing; and we have seen mothers, not only selling the innocence of their daughters, but selling it by a contract, authenticated by the signature of a public officer, and the performance of which was secured by the protection of the laws.‡

"The parlours of the convents of noble ladies and the houses of the courtesans, though the police carefully kept up a number of spies about them, were the only assemblies for society in Venice; and in these two places, so different from each other, there was equal freedom. Music, collations, gallantry, were not more forbidden in the parlours than at the casinos. There were a number of casinos for the purpose of public assemblies, where gaming was the principal pursuit of the company. It was a strange sight to see persons of either sex masked, or grave in their magisterial robes, round a table, invoking chance, and giving way at one instant to the agonies of despair, at the next to the illusions of hope, and that without uttering a single word.

"The rich had private casinos, but they lived *incognito* in them; and the wives whom they abandoned found compensa-

* Correspondence of M. Schlick, French chargé d'affaires. Despatch of 3rd September, 1785.

† The decree for their recall designates them as *nostræ benemeritæ meretrices*; a fund and some houses, called *Casa rampante*, were assigned to them; hence the opprobrious appellation of *Carampantie*.

‡ Mayer, Description of Venice, vol. ii.; and M. Archenholz, Picture of Italy, vol. i. ch. 2.

tion in the liberty they enjoyed. The corruption of morals had deprived them of their empire. We have just reviewed the whole history of Venice, and we have not once seen them exercise the slightest influence."—DARU, *Hist. de la Répub. de Venise*, vbl. v. p. 95.

NOTES.

Page 144.

"I smote the tardy bishop at Treviso."] An historical fact. See Marin Sanuto's "Lives of the Doges."

Page 149.

"*Doge (aside)*. Saint Marks shall strike that hour!"] The bells of San Marco were never rung but by order of the Doge. One of the pretexts for ringing this alarm was to have been an announcement of the appearance of a Genoese fleet off the Lagoon.

Page 151.

"A gondola, with one oar only, will."] A gondola is not like a common boat, but is as easily rowed with one oar as with two (though, of course, not so swiftly), and often is so from motives of privacy; and, since the decay of Venice, of economy.

Page 174.

"Engaged in secret to the Signory."] An historical fact. See APPENDIX, Note A.

Page 197.

"Within our palace precincts at San Polo."] The Doge's family palace.

Page 208.

"Of the red columns, where, on festal Thursday."] "Giovedì grasso,"—"fat or greasy Thursday,"—which I cannot literally translate in the text, was the day.

Page 208.

"Guards! let their mouths be gagged even in the act."] Historical fact. See Sanuto, APPENDIX, Note A.

Page 214.

"Ben. Say, conscript fathers, shall 'she be admitted?'"
The Venetian senate took the same title as the Roman, of
"conscript fathers."

Page 224.

"Doge. 'Tis with age, then." This
was the actual reply of Bailli, maire of Paris, to a Frenchman
who made him the same reproach on his way to execution,
in the earliest part of their revolution. I find in reading over
(since the completion of this tragedy), for the first time these
six years, "Venice Preserved," a similar reply "on a different
occasion by Renault, and other coincidences arising from the
subject. I need hardly remind the gentlest reader, that such
coincidences must be accidental, from the very facility of their
detection by reference to so popular a play on the stage and
in the closet as Otway's chef-d'œuvre.

Page 225.

"Who shall despise her!—She shall stoop to be." Should
the dramatic picture seem harsh, let the reader look to the
historical, of the period prophesied, or rather of the few years
preceding that period. Voltaire calculated their "nostre bene
merite Meretrici" at 12,000 of regulars, without including
volunteers and local militia, on what authority I know not;
but it is, perhaps, the only part of the population not decreased.
Venice once contained two hundred thousand inhabitants:
there are now about ninety thousand; and THESE!! few
individuals can conceive, and none could describe, the actual
state into which the more than infernal tyranny of Austria has
plunged this unhappy city. From the present decay and
degeneracy of Venice under the Barbarians, there are some
honourable individual exceptions. There is Pasqualigo, the
last, and, alas! *posthumous* son of the marriage of the Doges
with the Adriatic, who fought his frigate with far greater
gallantry than any of his French coadjutors in the memorable
action off Lissa. I came home in the squadron with the
prizes in 1811, and recollect to have heard Sir William Hoste,
and the other officers engaged in that glorious conflict, speak
in the highest terms of Pasqualigo's behaviour. There is the
Abbate Morelli. There is Alvise Querini, who, after a long
and honourable diplomatic career, finds some consolation for
the wrongs of his country in the pursuits of literature with his
nephew, Vittor Benzon, the son of the celebrated beauty, the

heroine of "La Biondina in Goadoletta." There are the patrician poet Morosini, and the poet Lamberti the author of the "Biondina," &c., and many other estimable productions; and, not least in an Englishman's estimation, Madame Michelli, the translator of Shakspeare. There are the young Dandolo and the improvvisatore Carrer, and Giuseppe Albrizzi, the accomplished son of an accomplished mother. There is Aglietti, and, were there nothing else, there is the immortality of Canova. Cicognara, Mustoxithi, Bucati, &c. &c., I do not reckon, because the one is a Greek, and the others were born at least a hundred miles off, which, throughout Italy, constitutes, if not a *foreigner*, at least a *stranger* (*forestière*).

Page 225.

"Then when the Hebrew's in thy palaces." The chief palaces on the Brenta now belong to the Jews; who in the earlier times of the republic were only allowed to inhabit Mestri, and not to enter the city of Venice. The whole commerce is in the hands of the Jews and Greeks, and the Huns form the garrison.

Page 226.

"But in its stead, coarse lusts of habitude." [See APPENDIX, Note C.]

Page 226.

"Gainst which thou wilt not strive, and dar'st not murmur." If the Doge's prophecy seem remarkable, look to the following, made by Alamanni two hundred and seventy years ago:—"There is one very singular prophecy concerning Venice: 'If thou dost not change,' it says to that proud republic, 'thy liberty, which is already on the wing, will not reckon a century more than the thousandth year.' If we carry back the epocha of Venetian freedom to the establishment of the government under which the republic flourished, we shall find that the date of the election of the first Doge is 697; and if we add one century to a thousand, that is, eleven hundred years, we shall find the sense of the prediction to be literally this: 'Thy liberty will not last till 1797.' Recollect that Venice ceased to be free in the year 1796, the fifth year of the French republic; and you will perceive that there never was prediction more pointed, or more exactly followed by the event. You will, therefore, note as very remarkable the three lines of Alamanni

addressed to Venice; which, however, no one has pointed out:—

“Se non cangi pensier, un secol solo.
Non conterà sopra 'l millesimo anno
Tua libertà, che va fuggendo a volo.”

Many prophecies have passed for such, and many men have been called prophets for much less.”—GINGUENE, *Hist. Lit. de l'Italie*, t. ix. p. 144.

Page 226.

“Thou den of drunkards with the blood of princes!”] Of the first fifty Doges, *five* abdicated—*five* were banished with their eyes put out—*five* were MASSACRED—and *nine* deposed: so that *nineteen* out of fifty lost the throne by violence, besides two who fell in battle: this occurred long previous to the reign of Marino Faliero. One of his more immediate predecessors, Andrea Dandolo, died of vexation. Marino Faliero himself perished as related. Amongst his successors, *Foscari*, after seeing his son repeatedly tortured and banished, was deposed, and died of breaking a blood-vessel, on hearing the bell of Saint Mark's toll for the election of his successor. Morosini was impeached for the loss of Candia; but this was previous to his dukedom, during which he conquered the Morea, and was styled the Peloponnesian. Faliero might truly say,—

“Thou den of drunkards with the blood of princes!”

Page 228.

“Chief of the Ten.”] “Un Capo de' Dieci” are the words of Sanuto's Chronicle.

SARDANAPALUS.

Page 231.

“And thou, my own Ionian Myrrha, choose.”] “The Ionian” name had been still more comprehensive, having included the Achæians and the Eæotians, who, together with those to whom it was afterwards confined, would make nearly the whole of the Greek nation; and among the Orientals it was always the general name for the Greeks.”—MILFORD'S *Greece*, vol. i. p. 199.

Page 238.

"Eat, drink, and love; the rest's not worth a fillip."] "For this expedition he took only a small chosen body of the phalanx, but all his light troops. In the first day's march he reached Anchialus, a town said to have been founded by the king of Assyria, Sardanapalus. The fortifications, in their magnitude and extent, still in Arrian's time, bore the character of greatness, which the Assyrians appear singularly to have affected in works of the kind. A monument representing Sardanapalus was found there, warranted by an inscription in Assyrian characters, of course in the old Assyrian language, which the Greeks, whether well or ill, interpreted thus: 'Sardanapalus, son of Anacyndaraxes, in one day founded Anchialus and Tarsus. Eat, drink, play; all other human joys are not worth a fillip.' Supposing this version nearly exact (for Arrian says it was not quite so), whether the purpose has not been to invite to civil order a people disposed to turbulence, rather than to recommend immoderate luxury, may perhaps reasonably be questioned. What, indeed, could be the object of a king of Assyria in founding such towns in a country so distant from his capital, and so divided from it by an immense extent of sandy deserts and lofty mountains, and, still more, how the inhabitants could be at once in circumstances to abandon themselves to the intemperate joys which their prince has been supposed to have recommended, is not obvious; but it may deserve observation that, in that line of coast, the southern of Lesser Asia, ruins of cities, evidently of an age after Alexander, yet barely named in history, at this day astonish the adventurous traveller by their magnificence and elegance. Amid the desolation which, under a singularly barbarian government, has for so many centuries been daily spreading in the finest countries of the globe, whether more from soil and climate, or from opportunities for commerce, extraordinary means must have been found for communities to flourish there; whence it may seem that the measures of Sardanapalus were directed by juster views than have been commonly ascribed to him; but that monarch having been the last of a dynasty ended by a revolution, obloquy on his memory would follow of course from the policy of his successors and their partisans. The inconsistency of traditions concerning Sardanapalus is striking in Diodorus's account of him."—MILFORD'S *Greece*, vol. ix. p. 311.

Page 307.

"Some twenty stadia."] About two miles and a half.

THE TWO FOSCARI.

Page 347.

"Created by degrees an ocean Rome."] In Lady Morgan's fearless and excellent work upon Italy, I perceive the expression of "Rome of the Ocean" applied to Venice. The same phrase occurs in the "Two Foscari." My publisher can vouch for me, that the tragedy was written and sent to England some time before I had seen Lady Morgan's work, which I only received on the 16th of August. I hasten, however, to notice the coincidence, and to yield the originality of the phrase to her who first placed it before the public.

Page 348.

"That melody, which out of tones and tunes."] Alluding to the Swiss air and its effects.

Page 366.

"There often has been question about you."] An historical fact. See DARU, tom. ii.

Page 379.

"O'er those they slew. I've heard of widows' tears."]—The Venetians appear to have had a particular turn for breaking the hearts of their Doges. The following is another instance of the kind in the Doge Marco Barbarigo: he was succeeded by his brother Agostino Barbarigo, whose chief merit is here mentioned.—"Le doge, blessé de trouver constamment un contradicteur et un censeur si amer dans son frère, lui dit un jour en plein conseil; 'Messire Augustin, vous faites tout votre possible pour hâter ma mort; vous vous flattez de me succéder; mais, si les autres vous connaissent aussi bien que je vous connais, ils n'auront garde de vous élire.' Là dessus il se leva, ému de colère, rentra dans son appartement, et mourut quelques jours après. Ce frère, contre lequel il s'était emporté, fut précisément le successeur qu'on lui donna. C'était un mérite dont on s'était à tenir compte; surtout à un parent, de s'être mis en opposition avec le chef de la république."—DARU, *Hist. de Venise*, t. ii. p. 533.

Page 380.

"*Lor. (pointing to the Doge's body.)* That *he* has paid me!"]
 "*L'ha pagata.*" An historical fact. See *Hist. de Venise*, par
 P. DARU, t. ii. p. 411.

CAIN.

Page 435.

"But the four rivers would not cleanse my soul." The "four rivers" which flowed round Eden, and consequently the only waters with which Cain was acquainted upon earth.

HEAVEN AND EARTH.

Page 438.

"Albeit thou watchest with 'the Seven.'" The archangels, said to be seven in number, and to occupy the eighth rank in the celestial hierarchy.

Page 450.

"In a few hours the glorious giants' graves." "And there were giants in the earth in those days, and after, mighty men, which were of old, men of renown."—*Genesis*.

Page 450.

"And heaven set wide her windows; while mankind." "The same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened."—*Ibid*.

Page 451.

"The scroll of Enoch prophesied it long." The book of Enoch, preserved by the Ethiopians, is said by them to be anterior to the flood.

WERNER.

Page 509.

"From the Ravenstone, by choking you myself." The Ravenstone, "Rabenstein," is the *stone gibbet* of Germany, and so called from the ravens perching on it.

DEFORMED TRANSFORMED.

Page 577.

"Bestrides the Hartz Mountain."] This is a well-known German superstition—a gigantic shadow produced by reflection on the Brocken.

Page 583.

"From the red earth like Adam."] Adam means "*red earth*," from which the first man was formed.

Page 600.

"Weep not—*strike!* for Rome is mourning!"] Scipio, the second Africanus, is said to have repeated a verse of Homer, and wept over the burning of Carthage. He had better have granted it a capitulation.

DOMESTIC PIECES.

Page 658.

"Like to the Pontic monarch of old days."] Mithridates of Pontus.

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